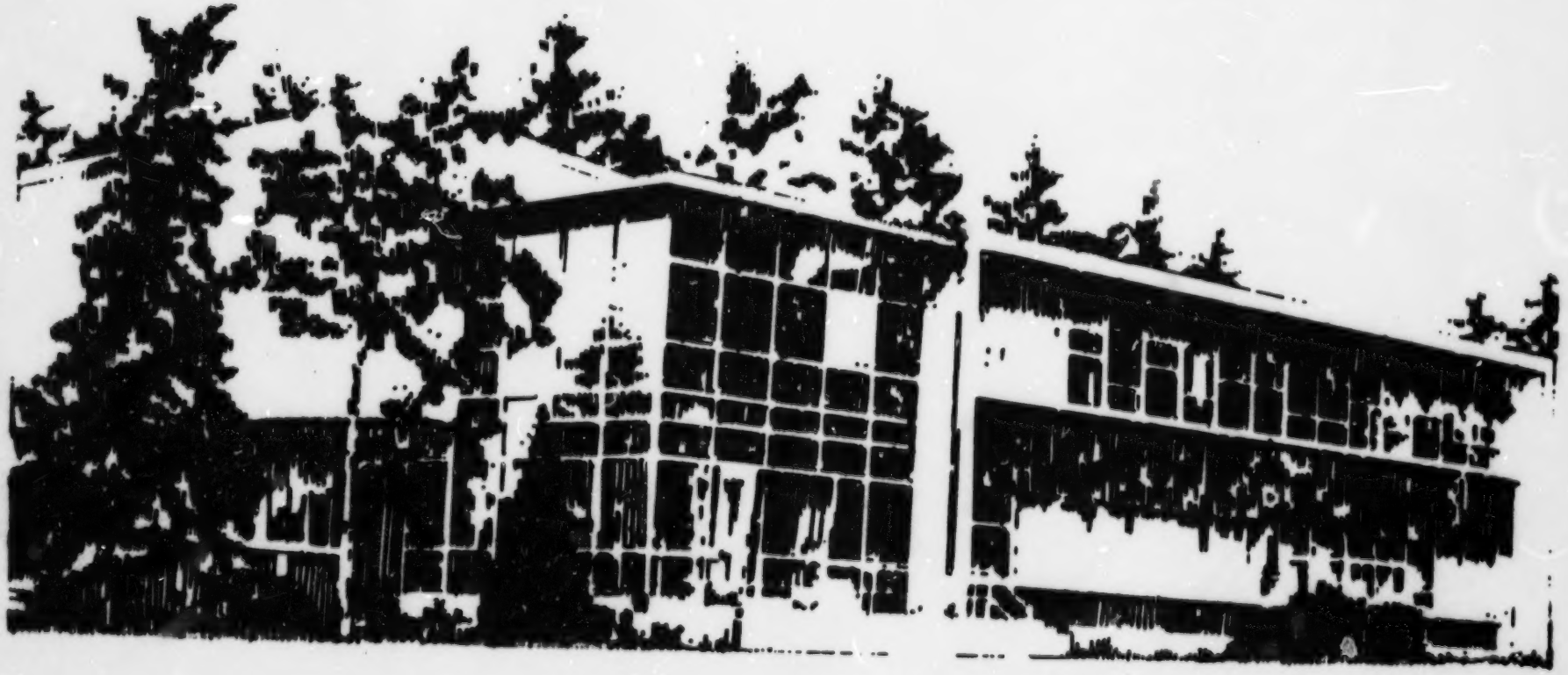
The Re-use of Public Buildings

Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

SEPTEMBER 1984



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Executive Summary

1
Many public buildings become outmoded or obsolete and are converted to new uses. This report deals with the impacts of such conversion projects on communities.

2
During the study 400 re-use projects were identified through a telephone survey of Ontario municipalities with populations between 5,000 and 125,000. Ten re-use projects were examined in detail.

The case studies represent a variety of building uses, urban settings, regions and municipal involvement and include: historical buildings and buildings of architectural merit; old non-historic buildings which are landmarks; and newer buildings in sound condition.

3
The original uses in buildings studied included post offices, municipal offices, a police station, a mill, theatres, and a public works complex. The final uses included libraries, a police station, municipal offices, commercial and charitable group offices, a community hall, senior citizen's lodging, public meeting rooms, arts studios and galleries, rehearsal halls, theatres, a printing plant and a range of other facilities. Most of the buildings are in public ownership; three private examples were also studied.

4
Impacts attributable to the conversions were mainly positive. Negative effects were reported when the conversion provided makeshift accommodation for community groups.

5
The survey and analysis identified the following effects from building conversion projects.

Urban Planning

- changes to planning documents being required
- improved parking, or parking shortages
- requirement for street access improvements (driveways)
- improved urban atmosphere through building preservation
- provision of re-use activities in convenient locations
- provision of land uses which are more (or less) acceptable to surrounding residents

Economic and Financial

- lower capital cost compared with the construction of new buildings
- increased maintenance and heating costs over newer buildings
- grants and subsidies for restoration being used
- increased tourism potential
- increased local job opportunities
- retention of municipal tax base
- reasonable user costs for community groups

Social and Cultural

- expansion of social and cultural amenities and programs
- preservation of buildings of architectural or historic value
- citizen involvement in renovation and maintenance of some re-use buildings
- increased housing

Administration

- addition or reduction of administrative responsibilities for municipalities, depending on whether the building is preserved or sold

Other

- greater freedom of activity for user groups in older buildings
- some inconvenience in building layout, depending on the extent of renovation
- difficulty in meeting fire safety standards
- the possibility to "test" the demand for an activity in a temporary low-cost facility.

6

The major considerations for those involved in planning building conversion are:

Type of use

- an assessment of the demand and desirability for the proposed use and of the user-group stability
- the possibility of using the building on an interim basis to determine demand
- an assessment of secondary or multiple use potential

Building and Site

- the compatibility of the building and site with the proposed use
- the structural suitability of the building, and fire safety
- parking needs of the proposed use
- access for the handicapped
- the extent of renovation needed
- architectural/historic/landmark value
- suitability of the location including compatibility with surrounding uses
- vehicle and pedestrian access

Financial/Administrative

- potential costs and revenues, i.e. renovation cost, maintenance, tax assessment, sale or lease revenue
- administrative roles and relationships of those involved (municipality/users)
- availability of funding, i.e. heritage grants, handicapped access grants, urban renewal programs, volunteer labour

Other

- employment potential of re-use activity
- tourist attraction potential of the building and its use
- the attitudes of the public and the potential users

7

The report revealed few surprises in the re-use experience. There were

some negative impacts; however, they were mostly administrative in nature and considered to be minor

8

The major issue in the re-use process is twofold. The first task is to identify those buildings which may become available such as obsolete public and private buildings which should be saved. The second part of the issue is to determine potential users in order to match users with available space.

9

The experience of the majority of Ontario municipalities with the re-use projects has been quite positive. It is evident from this experience as well that the re-use of buildings will become a more common activity as time goes by given changing needs and changing technology.

1 Introduction

Opportunities

For social and economic reasons, some public buildings become obsolete. This study describes the experiences of several municipalities with the reassignment of such buildings to new uses. Based on the lessons learned from these re-use projects, the report then presents key factors to be taken into account in considering re-use opportunities.

The variety of obsolete public buildings across Ontario is large: city halls which have been outgrown or have become outmoded, fire halls, libraries, maintenance and transit buildings, electrical substations, even opera houses. Some buildings, such as historic houses, have been donated to municipalities by private citizens for specific uses. Other surplus public buildings may include railway stations, buildings expropriated in conjunction with public works projects, and buildings vacated by senior levels of government. Sites may vary in size from a residential lot to a railway yard or airbase.

Some public buildings become "surplus" because of changing requirements. At the same time new needs for accommodation may develop within a community. When the timing of such a need coincides with the availability of a suitable building, decisions on re-use are straightforward; for example, a branch library may occupy an obsolete town hall. More often, however, a sound or historic building becomes available independently of a suitable occupant. In such cases, the municipality must decide whether to reassign the building to a different use; for example, an arts centre or housing for senior citizens, in a building which may have served as a police station or a post office.

Sometimes there may be a number of potential users for the building. The municipality must at these times consider a number of factors in deciding which use to accommodate. Some of these are planning considerations: Is the site large enough to provide parking and amenity space? Will there be access or traffic problems? Are there supporting or related services in the vicinity? Is there transit service? What will the community attitude be?

Financial, administrative and other factors also need consideration. Will there be municipal costs, or benefits, as a result of the project? Will there be objections from private enterprise to the municipal activity? Many of these considerations must be addressed before the technical feasibility of the building conversion is assessed.

The Scope and Objectives of the Study

This document is intended to help local planners, administrators, and politicians in assessing the re-use of public buildings. The report contains:

- re-use examples illustrating the experience of municipalities where adaptive re-use of buildings has taken place
- the possible impacts of making the change
- a procedure for assessing the re-use of buildings

This study concentrates on the experiences of small and medium sized municipalities with building conversions and the lessons learned from these examples. The lessons have to do with the success and limitations of the projects from the municipal perspective – the needs met, user satisfaction, public attitude and the financial and administrative implications. A particular interest in the examination of re-use examples was the procedure in bringing about the re-use within the urban planning process.

Some buildings which are candidates for re-use have historic importance or architectural merit; many do not. Building assessment procedures are well covered elsewhere and are not part of this study. The architectural, engineering, and space-planning aspects of the conversions are mentioned only in connection with the "impacts" of the project.

The Re-Use Projects Considered

About 400 re-use projects were identified through a telephone survey. The survey identified a range of projects available for further study. The list of projects is included in this report (Appendix A) so that municipalities can check directly with others who may have related experience in the adaptive re-use of buildings.

The 400 projects represent re-use examples:

- in Ontario communities between 5,000 and 125,000 persons
- in all Ontario regions
- covering a wide range of re-use activities
- mainly completed within the last 5 to 15 years

The project dates were selected so that information on both the conversion process and subsequent impacts would be available.

School re-use projects and historic houses used as museums were not included in the study.

Ten case studies were selected from this list for detailed examination. The case studies are discussed in detail in Section 2. The emphasis in the detailed analysis was on municipal experience with the conversion, including the planning impacts. The case studies' examples were chosen to represent:

- a variety of building types
- a variety of original and final uses
- a range of municipal involvement
- regional differences
- both historic and non-historic buildings

The impacts of the re-use of buildings, criteria for examining potential re-use, and the lessons and considerations which municipalities should apply in deciding on the conversion of buildings are based on these case studies. The following chapters describe the case studies and present the findings of the analysis.

2
The Case Studies

Introduction

Ten examples of the re-use of buildings were selected as case studies. They were chosen to represent various building types and re-uses throughout Ontario. While the examples were chosen for their diversity, there are common lessons about the re-use of buildings which can be derived from these projects.

The following table lists the ten projects studied. They range from public buildings where there was no municipal involvement in the re-use to those where the municipality was totally responsible for the re-use.

The case study projects were examined through discussions with local municipal officials and visits to most of the buildings.

The emphasis in interviews and investigations was on:

- the history of the building
- the reasons for the re-use
- the procedure in bringing about the new use of the building and the site
- the new uses
- the impacts of the change in use, both at the time of the conversion and afterward
- lessons learned: administrative, financial, urban planning

Case Study Summary Table

Project	Building Type and Construction Date	Significance
PUBLIC EXAMPLES		
1 Aylmer – Town Hall to Library	Important historic "hall" type building – 1873	• controversy over the re-use • historic
2 Kenora – Post Office to Municipal Offices	Historic; masonry bearing wall and wood spans; not a flexible plan – 1898	• controversy over the re-use • thorough reconstruction • "key" downtown site
3 Gravenhurst – Opera House and Town Hall to Theatre and Community Hall	Historic; "hall" type building; masonry bearing wall and wood spans – 1901	• performing arts • tourist attraction • secondary community uses
4 Cobourg – Armouries to Police Station	Typical armouries; free-span downstairs, offices and large rooms upstairs – 1904	• flexible 'long-span' building • mixture of low cost uses • police station in central location
5 Newcastle (Bowmanville) – Grain Mill to Visual Arts Centre	Typical industrial; masonry bearing wall and timber post-and-beam construction – 1905	• use of old industrial building by community arts organization • semi-autonomous user
6 Oshawa – Police Station to Arts Resource Centre	Modern police station and court house; steel and concrete construction – 1952	• use of modern police station for community groups on low cost basis
7 Sault Ste. Marie – Municipal Offices to Library	Modern steel frame – 1958	• typical municipal offices, made redundant by amalgamation
PRIVATE EXAMPLES		
8 Owen Sound – Post Office to Senior Citizens' Lodging	Bearing wall and reinforced concrete – 1907	• private example, serving senior citizens • cooperation by the Town in rezoning
9 Perth – Post Office to Insurance Agency	Modern steel frame – 1931	• no municipal involvement • successful preservation of the building
10 St. Catharines – Public Works Building to Printing Plant	Modern industrial type building – 1952	• provision of employment through the sale of the building

Old Town Hall to Library

Town of Aylmer, County of Elgin

Description of Project

The new home of the Elgin County Library and Archives, occupies the former Aylmer Town Hall. As a designated heritage site it is an important historical and learning centre in the Town of Aylmer.

The building was constructed in 1873 and is a 'listed building' revealing distinctive architectural features of its time. Exterior walls are yellow brick and the interior is of heavy timber construction.

The interior contains two large open spaces with the library on the ground floor, and the archives and the former theatre/opera house on the second floor. There is a total of 1800 m^2 of useable space including the two main floors and a basement. The theatre portion of the building is presently unused. There is a metered parking lot at the rear of the building.

Previous Uses and Owner

- Originally used as a Town Hall containing municipal offices, council chambers, and a theatre/opera house.
- At various times during its history the building housed a fire hall, a police office and lock-up, township offices, an assessment office, a court room, a general meeting room, a community centre, and public works storage.
- The Town Council continued to use the building until 1978 when it was vacated because the space was inadequate. The building remained vacant until it was restored in October 1981.
- The building has always been owned by the Town of Aylmer.

Present Uses and Owner

- The building is presently used as a library. It contains a "history room" and archives section and provides full local library services.
- The building also contains a theatre and opera house but restoration is required to make this functional.
- The present occupant is the Library Board of Elgin County.

Permitted Use – Official Plan and Zoning By-law

- The Town of Aylmer Official Plan – the site is designated as 'General Commercial' permitting a wide variety of commercial and institutional uses.
- The Town of Aylmer Zoning By-law – the site is zoned 'Institutional.'
- Both the original use and the converted use are in conformity with the Official Plan and Zoning By-law; thus no amendments were required.

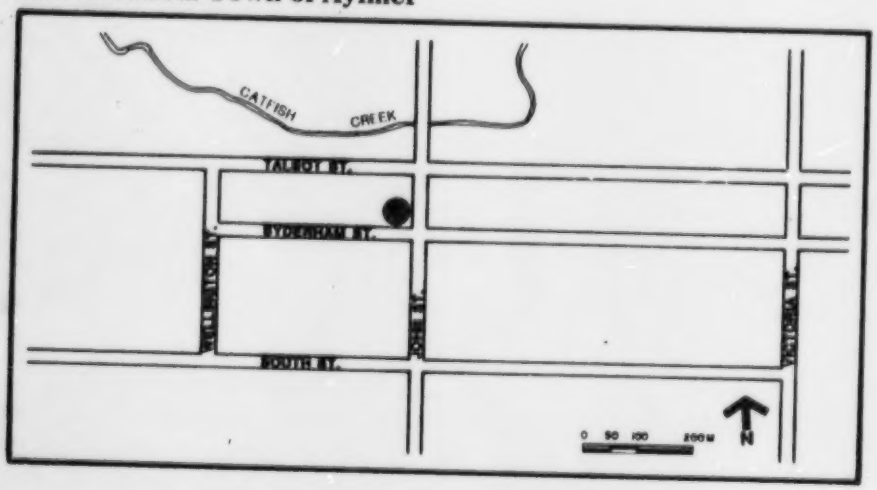
Reasons for Change in Use

- In 1976 the building was being used by the police and for municipal

offices. Both were expanding and it was decided that these functions needed more space than the Old Town Hall could offer. The police and municipal offices were moved to the expanded Old Post Office building in 1978.

- The Town did not want the expense of maintaining a vacant building.
- The County needed a larger library. The Old Town Hall building was chosen because:
  - it has an ideal downtown location for a library
  - the site allows pedestrian access
  - the building is a community focal point
  - the historical and archives sections of the library are appropriate in a heritage building
  - there is ample parking
  - library space could be expanded in the future
  - the financial arrangement was feasible

Site Location: Town of Aylmer



Process of Land Use Change and the Impacts

Process

The municipal offices and police headquarters were transferred to the Old Post Office building in 1978. The Old Town Hall building remained vacant while the Town tried unsuccessfully to sell it.

Council then decided to demolish the building. 'Heritage Aylmer,' a group of concerned citizens, was formed to block the demolition, pointing out the historic significance of the building. Once the building was granted a heritage designation, Council decided to seek another use.

Heritage Aylmer secured the Elgin County Libary as a tenant after commissioning the architectural firm of C.A. Ventin to do a feasibility study for the restoration of the building. A financial commitment was obtained from the Ontario Heritage Foundation to help in the funding for the restoration project.

Following the securing of additional grant money, Council supported the proposal and the restoration was completed in 1982.

The following were the financial sources for the restoration:

Ontario Heritage Foundation approximately	$ 95,000
County of Elgin	41,000
Heritage Aylmer	40,100
Town of Aylmer	78,274
Money from sale of old library	25,000
Community Centres Recreation Act Grant	36,813
Access grant (elevator)	27,270
Wintario	69,388
TOTAL approximately	$412,845

The Library Board of Elgin County leases the building from the Town for a nominal fee as well as assuming short-term maintenance costs. The Town of Aylmer has assumed an annual operating cost of approximately $13,000 for heating, landscaping, as well as long-term maintenance costs.

Impacts

The use of the library since its relocation has increased fourfold, attracting people to the following new services:

- pre-school educational programs
- film programs

- historical society meetings

The building is now available to handicapped persons.

The renovated heritage building is now included on Aylmer's historical tour, attracting visitors from the surrounding region. As the Town's oldest building, it provides a focal point of historic and cultural value.

Significance of the Re-use Example

The most significant factor in this re-use example is the restoration of a unique and historically important building. The project has resulted in increased library use. The conversion has maintained the potential for even further use of the building in the future, as funds become available to renovate the vacant portion of the building.

Lessons from the Re-use Example

This example illustrates the need for cooperation among elected officials, municipal employees, and the public. Without community involvement the re-use might not have taken place.

This case study reveals the importance of securing professional consultants to achieve the desired results. Architects with expertise in building restoration were employed to complete the task.

Also required are people with knowledge and expertise in securing government funding. In this case many public agencies were contacted and funding was made available. This case study also indicates the importance of such funding.

Acknowledgements

Mr. C. Knapp, Clerk

Post Office to Municipal Offices

Town of Kenora, District of Kenora

Description of Project

The Town of Kenora municipal offices are presently located in the former Federal Post Office and Customs Building.

The 'old post office' was constructed in 1898 and is one of the most substantial landmarks in Kenora. It is a good example of late 19th Century post office design. The brick masonry with finely detailed stone accents around windows and doors is considered to be of significant architectural value. The prominent clock tower is the visual focal point of the main street. The building has been designated as historic under the Ontario Heritage Act.

The building provides about 1690 m^2 of useable space in its three storeys and basement.

Previous Uses and Owners

- From 1898 until 1970 the building was used as a Post Office and offices for the Federal Government.
- The building was owned and operated by the Federal Government until sold to the Town of Kenora in 1971. It remained vacant until its present use was established in 1980.

Present Uses and Owner

- The structure is presently used as a municipal office building, including:
  - council chamber
  - social services offices
  - electric and telephone billing offices
  - general administrative offices
- Since 1971 the building has been owned by the Town of Kenora.
- Located on Main Street near the downtown waterfront area, the building with its spire is described as the gateway to the Town from the west for travellers on the Trans-Canada Highway.
- Surrounding land uses include CP Rail tracks to the north and east, downtown commercial to the south and Lake of the Woods across Main Street South to the west.
- Its downtown location provides convenient access with major parking available near the site, parking spaces are also available on-site.

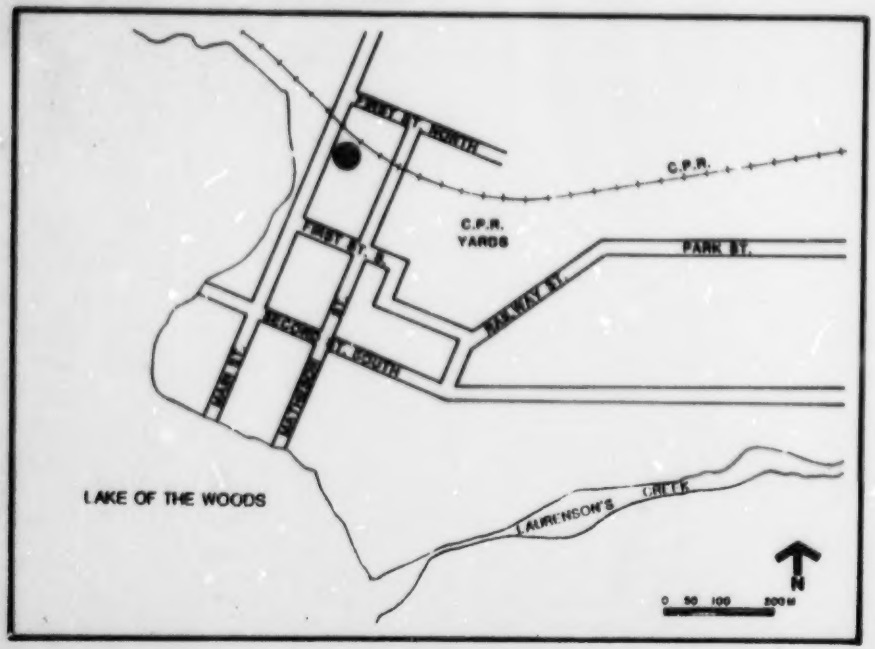
Permitted Use – Official Plan, Zoning By-law

- The Official Plan for the Town of Kenora designates the site as part

of a 'General Commercial Area' allowing for major commercial uses as well as institutional uses.

- The Zoning By-law for the Town of Kenora zones the site 'General Commercial Zone C2' permitting a wide variety of commercial and institutional uses.
- Both the former and present uses comply with the Official Plan and Zoning By-law. A separate by-law was passed to designate the former Post Office Building as having architectural and historical value.

Site Location: Town of Kenora



Reasons for the Change in Use

- The Federal Government declared its Post Office and Customs Building surplus in 1970.
- The Town purchased the structure to accommodate future road construction.
- Renovation was originally initiated to house the local museum.
- The present use was decided upon because:
  - the old municipal building was discovered to be structurally inadequate
  - the need for accommodation became urgent, and renovation of the post office was already in progress
  - its location was central and easily accessible
  - the cost to the Town was reasonable
  - the building had a heritage designation
  - the public wished to save the building
  - there is room for expansion

Process of Land Use Change and the Impacts

Process

The process of land use change was initiated when the Federal Government decided to declare the Post Office and Customs Building surplus. The building and site were acquired by the Town of Kenora at a cost of $10,000 in 1971. The intention was to provide part of the right-of-way for a new alignment of the Trans-Canada Highway through Kenora.

A referendum was held which defeated the proposed re-alignment. A by-law was passed in 1977 designating the structure as a building of architectural and historic merit in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act.

Council then decided, after several proposals, to renovate the building and use it as a museum replacing a small existing museum. In 1979 rehabilitation of the building for museum and municipal purposes started.

In 1980, before the project was completed, the Town of Kenora Municipal Building was found to be structurally inadequate. Council decided to utilize the entire renovated Post Office for municipal offices on a temporary basis. Council has since found the renovated accommodation to be adequate, and the Town headquarters will

probably be permanent. The museum requirements are being met on another site.

The total cost of the renovation was $753,320.00 and was financed as follows:

Ontario Heritage Foundation	$125,000.00
Municipal Debenture Proceeds	$468,500.00
Municipal Contribution	$159,820.00

Impacts

In moving to the larger and better equipped renovated building it has been possible to serve the needs of the public in a more efficient manner. Two cashier positions are now open compared with one at the former building; more spacious areas, including committee rooms and council chambers are available for meeting purposes and public use; there are better and larger storage facilities; space is available for specialized equipment including a computer and word processor; and additional private offices are available for management personnel.

Although it has not become a serious problem, the location of the rehabilitated building has not permitted the development of suitable public parking. Approximately fifteen parking spaces on the site are for staff and the handicapped.

The building itself poses some problems typical of older buildings. One is the lack of an elevator to serve public facilities on the second and third floors.

Significance of the Re-use Example

This example illustrates how public sentiment prevented the destruction of an important landmark, while fulfilling a long-standing municipal need. It also illustrates the importance of the Ontario Heritage Foundation subsidy in making the project feasible.

The choice between road construction and the saving of buildings is also typical. The public opinion on the complicated issue was voiced through a referendum.

Lessons from the Re-use Example

While the use of the building as a municipal headquarters was originally intended to be short-term (five to ten years) it appears that the structure can continue to serve this function for a minimum of 30 years. Although this was determined only afterward in this case, municipalities should attempt to define the service period prior to the conversion of buildings because substantial amounts of money may be required.

The example points out the role of community involvement in important issues. Communities can conduct referendums to determine land use preferences.

The Kenora experience illustrates to other municipalities the importance of not allowing buildings to remain vacant. It took almost ten years to achieve the present use. In the interim the building was deteriorating, resulting in increased renovation costs.

Acknowledgements

D.T. McLeod: Chief Administrative Officer

Opera House and Municipal Building to Theatre and Community Hall

Town of Gravenhurst, District Municipality of Muskoka

Description of Project

Constructed in 1901 and named the Opera House, this building contained a theatre, municipal council offices, council chamber and meeting rooms. The present uses include a theatre and rental space for community groups. The two storeys and basement contain approximately 3,000 m² of useable space. The building is constructed of red brick and timber, and features a corner tower; the appearance resembles a church more closely than a theatre (see photograph).

Previous Uses and Owners

- Originally used as a theatre and municipal offices.
- Constructed and owned by the Town of Gravenhurst.

Present Uses and Owners

- The original second floor theatre has been refurbished and has a seating capacity for 350 persons. It is used for three summer months by the Muskoka Foundation for the Arts. Other theatre and community groups use the theatre at other times.
- The ground floor has been renovated and contains a hall which can accommodate 200 persons. The hall is for non-profit use and for private wedding receptions and banquets.
- The basement has been renovated and contains a drop-in centre for senior citizens.
- The building is still owned and operated by the Town of Gravenhurst.
- Located at the northwest corner of Muskoka Road and Sharp Street (see map).
- Downtown setting along the major north-south arterial street (Muskoka Road).
- Surrounding land uses are all commercial retail.
- There is a parking lot at the rear of the building.

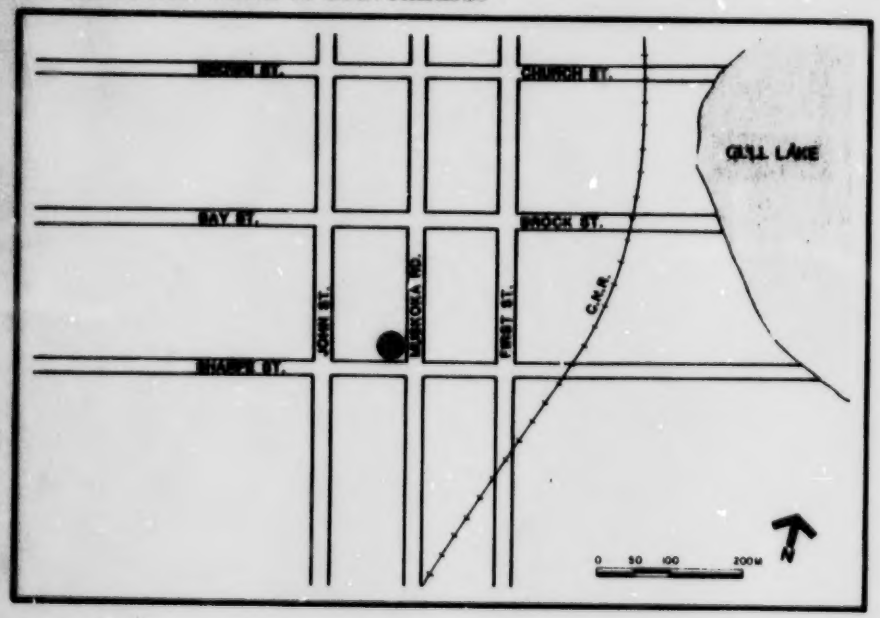
Permitted Use – Official Plan, Zoning By-law

- Under the Gravenhurst Secondary Plan, Amendment No. 13 to the Official Plan of the Muskoka Planning Area, the site is designated as 'Central Business District' permitting retail, office, institutional and cultural land uses.
- Under the Town of Gravenhurst Zoning By-law the site is zoned 'C1 – Commercial General' permitting a variety of commercial land uses. Public uses such as the Opera House are permitted in this zone.

Reasons for Change in Use

- The major change in use concerns the ground floor and the basement which were used primarily for municipal purposes.
- It was important to keep such a historic building in active use.
- A need existed for additional community hall space.
- A need existed for additional senior citizen recreational space.
- The project is feasible on thia site because:
  - it has good local and regional accessibility
  - parking is available for banquets, the theatre and seniors' activities
  - multiple use of building is practical
  - conversion of the building was achieved at reasonable cost
  - the project is financially feasible for the theatre and the municipality

Site Location: Town of Gravenhurst



Process of Land Use Change and the Impacts

Process

The Town of Gravenhurst municipal functions were all united in a new municipal building in 1971. This left the ground floor and basement of the Opera House underutilized.

In 1974 Council decided to renovate and expand the Opera House to accommodate a senior citizen's drop-in centre, and to provide community hall space. The hall is used by both non-profit organizations and private groups on a rental basis.

Impacts

The newly renovated portion of the facility provides a seniors' drop-in centre, and a banquet facility for the residents. As well, the building has become a focal point for the arts in the region.

The municipality has assumed an average annual operating cost of about $60,000. Some revenue is received through the use of the theatre. Indirect benefits accrue to Gravenhurst through tourists attending the theatre.

The use of this heritage building will provide future generations with a historical link of cultural value.

Significance of the Re-use Example

This use preserves an important building. The example is also significant because it provides amenities: a seniors drop-in centre, a theatre, and community hall space. This example also illustrates the value of community cooperation; no public opposition to municipal expenditures for restoration.

Lessons from the Re-use Example

Municipalities may benefit financially from the conservation and use of existing municipal buildings rather than the construction of new facilities. In this case an existing historic building has provided space for needed amenities at lower cost than new facilities. It is perhaps unlikely that a new theatre building could have been economical to build.

Community cooperation is an important factor in this type of re-use because residents pay for the renovation, and its success depends on their using it.

It is also of cultural benefit to maintain the historical context of the building, and to maintain a local theatre serving a wide summer audience.

Acknowledgements

Mr. Doherty, Planning and Zoning Coordinator
Mr. M. Barnes, Recreation Facilities Manager

Armouries to Police Station

Town of Cobourg, County of Northumberland

Description of Project

Constructed in 1904, the former armoury houses the police station, and various cultural and charitable groups. The site is located in the central business district and provides public parking to downtown visitors.

Recently known as the Municipal Building, the building is a typical turn-of-the-century armoury, featuring heavy red brick masonry construction and spans of wood. It is a building of distinctive character.

The police station occupies half of the available 1,770 m² of space on three storeys, including the ground floor, second floor and basement.

Previous Uses and Owners

- Used as an armoury until 1970. It became redundant due to centralization of the militia elsewhere.
- The building was purchased by the municipality in 1970 for the parking potential of the site.
- Municipal parking established in 1970.
- Police station established in 1970.
- Other parts of the building became the temporary municipal headquarters from 1972 to 1978, during the restoration of Victoria Hall.

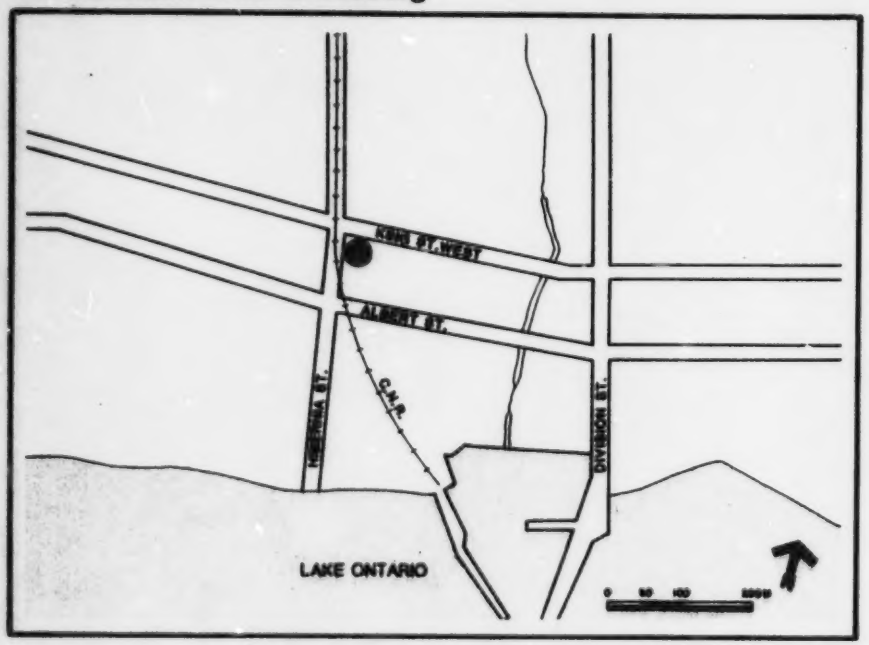
Present Uses and Owner

- The building is presently occupied by the following:
  - police station: reception area, interview rooms, offices, staff facilities, cells, garage
  - commercial tenant: an insurance adjustor
  - charitable groups: the Community Care office; Horizons of Friendship (Honduras); Women in Crisis; Society for the Restoration of Victoria Hall
  - cultural groups: Northumberland Players' office, rehearsal space, set construction and storage area; Cobourg Art Club studio
  - air cadet headquarters in a section of the former armoury garage
- The building is presently owned and maintained by the Town of Cobourg.
- The tenants' rent varies according to their ability to pay:
  - air cadets: rent free
  - art club: rent free
  - charitable groups: low rental
  - commercial tenant (insurance adjustor): moderate rental
- The building is an integral part of the main street of Cobourg and of the downtown area. It is one block from Victoria Hall, the municipal headquarters.
- The entire site is approximately .275 ha in area. This includes the building and 90 parking spaces, of which 20 spaces are reserved.

Permitted Use – Official Plan, Zoning By-law

- The Official Plan designates the site as Commercial.
- The Zoning By-law zones the site Commercial Type 3 permitting a wide variety of commercial and institutional uses.
- Both the former use and the present use are in conformity with land use regulations. No amendments were required.

Site Location: Town of Cobourg



Reasons for the Change in Use

- The militia centralized its activities elsewhere in 1970
- The Town purchased the property to establish the public parking lot, without a specific building use in mind; however, it was known that the Police Department was inadequately housed.
- When Victoria Hall was condemned in 1972 the municipal government was moved to the former armoury until 1978.
- When the municipal government was restored to Victoria Hall in 1978, vacant space in the Municipal Building (armoury) was allocated to charitable and cultural groups.
- The project is feasible on this site because it provides:
  - good regional/local vehicular access
  - easy pedestrian access
  - abundant parking
- The building itself was suitable because it had:
  - an adaptable ground floor, largely 'open span' construction
  - secure entrances and barred windows suitable for police use
  - space easily adaptable for the police garage
  - expansion potential
  - some space requiring very little renovation, suitable for community groups

Process of Land Use Change and the Impacts

Process

When the Federal Government decided to shift its militia operations the armoury was offered for sale, first to the Municipality. The Town of Cobourg was interested in the property because of its potential parking space in the downtown area.

A price of $30,000 was agreed upon. The building was then adapted as a police station. Costs were minimal using Town staff.

Impacts

The Town was responsible for some renovations. Currently the Town operates and maintains the building at an annual cost of about $13,000, with some of the cost offset by rental fees.

The building provides adequate accommodation for the police station and other tenants at a minimal cost, in a convenient downtown location.

During the renovation of Victoria Hall the armoury was useful as the location of municipal government.

Cultural advantages have been extended to citizens because of the inexpensive accommodation provided for the art and dramatic groups. Benefits are also provided by the cadets and the charitable organizations.

In addition, an interesting turn-of-the-century landmark has been preserved.

Significance of the Re-use Example

Large-span buildings, as represented by the armoury, are flexible in allowing walls to be placed where required. The armoury example provides modern accommodation for the police station.

This re-use project, like some of the other case study examples, provides inexpensive space for community groups that might not exist otherwise. This is possible only by utilizing older buildings without extensive renovation.

While not of the same architectural significance as older buildings in Cobourg such as Victoria Hall, the re-use of the building preserves a distinctive, interesting and prominent landmark. It also keeps the building in an appropriate public use as a police station and cultural headquarters.

As envisioned when the building was purchased by the Town, the site has provided public parking to support commerce in the central business district.

There are, however, some disadvantages in the older building:

- The stairs are difficult for elderly and handicapped persons. This has limited the use for organizations serving those groups.
- The drama club finds the second floor accommodation difficult for moving sets. (This may be rectified by re-allocation of space within the building.)
- The basement storage is damp, not really suitable for archives or valuable materials.
- Only natural ventilation is possible, sometimes a discomfort in hot weather.

In general, however, the building provides accommodation that is inexpensive and which would not otherwise be available for the tenants.

Lessons from the Re-use Example

The acquisition of the building, and its upkeep, have not been expensive and in fact have provided a considerable saving compared with new accommodation. This is because the building was sound, because tenants do not need or demand sophisticated modern space, and because the building was not historic in nature and therefore did not need extensive restoration.

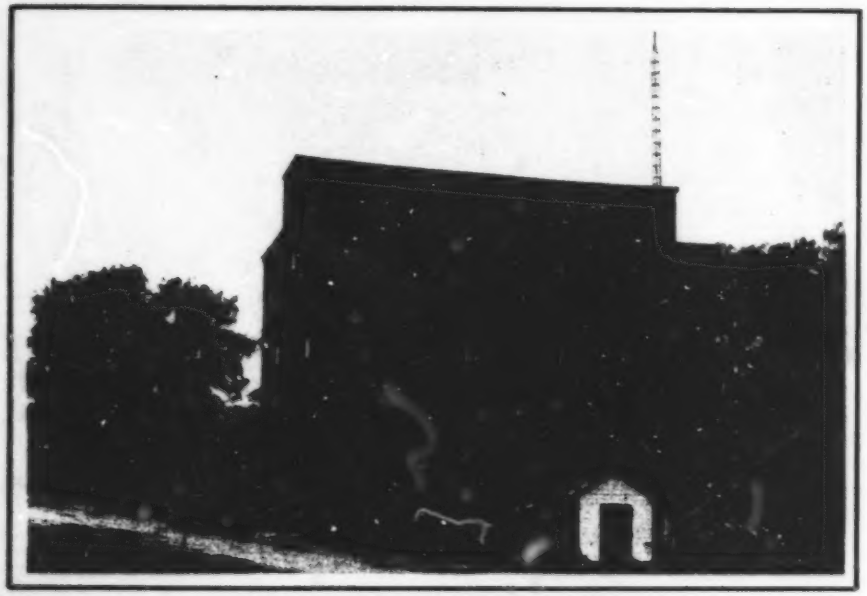
Some of the community needs which were met through the acquisition were unforeseen. There proved to be a demand by worthy groups for the space, provided that the cost could be kept reasonably low. The timing of the acquisition was fortunate to accommodate Town Hall functions on a temporary basis.

Some costs have been offset by rental of part of the building to commercial tenants.

Acknowledgements

Mr. R. Baxter, Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. R. Stinson, Deputy Clerk

Grain Mill to Visual Arts Centre



Town of Newcastle, Regional Municipality of Durham

Description of Project

The Visual Arts Centre, consisting of an art gallery and studio space, occupies the former Cream of Barley Mill building. The centre benefits from the spacious interior of the building. It provides an important cultural amenity in the Town of Bowmanville.

The Arts Centre/former mill building features red brick construction with a field stone foundation. The interior structure is of post and beam wood construction, typical of turn-of-the-century industrial buildings. There is a total of approximately 560 m^2 of useable space in the three storeys and basement.

The site is suburban and picturesque, at the edge of a stream. It is on the outskirts of the former Town of Bowmanville.

Previous Uses and Owners

- Originally used as a grain mill and storage facility.
- Constructed in 1905 by the Soper family, after whom the creek is named.
- Purchased by the Rotary Club in 1965 – used for a community centre as part of the adjacent park.
- The Rotary Club sold the structure to the old Town of Bowmanville (part of the new Town of Newcastle) in 1970; then the building served as a community drop-in centre until the present use was instituted.

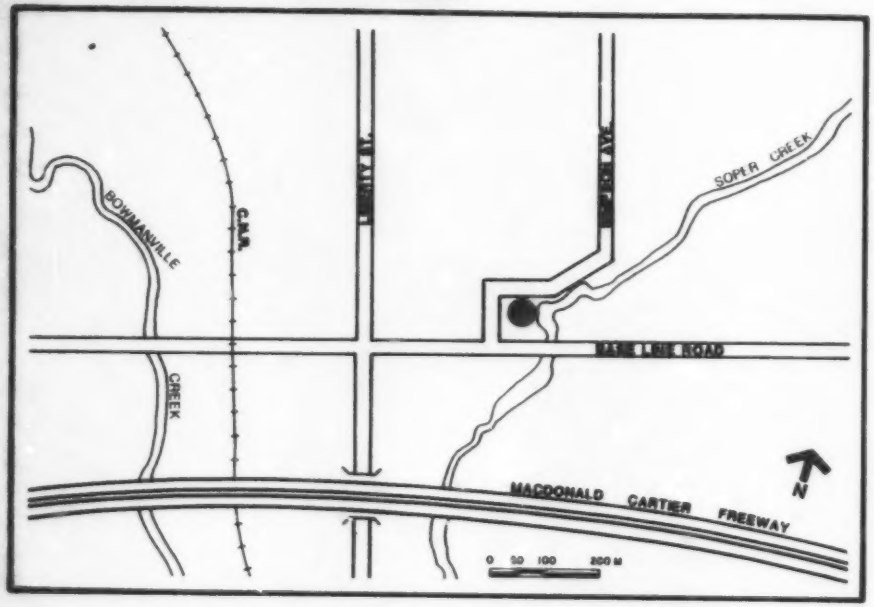
Present Uses and Owner

- Building presently used as a visual arts centre containing:
  - art gallery
  - pottery making studio
  - painting studio
  - handicrafts studio
  - picture rental gallery
  - art school
  - art sales
  - model railroad club
  - washrooms also serving the baseball field
- The Town of Newcastle is the present owner, allowing visual arts groups and others to use space through agreement with the Recreation Department.
- Located west of Soper Creek, east of Simpson Avenue, north of Base Line Road (see map).
- Picturesque valley setting, next to a stream.
- Surrounding land uses include:
  - low-density residential area 50 m to the west

- recreation park 250 m to the north
- industrial area 250 m to the south
- conservation authority lands to the east and adjacent

■ Long driveway, abundant gravel parking space.

Site Location: Town of Newcastle



Permitted Use – Official Plan, Zoning By-law

■ Bowmanville Official Plan – Urban Area – site is designated as 'hazard land' which allows for valley lands and open space type uses in conformity with uses permitted by the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority.

■ Bowmanville Zoning By-law – site is zoned as open space conforming with the Official Plan.

■ The grain mill was present prior to the Official Plan, Zoning by-law and Conservation Authority. The uses after abandonment of the mill were in conformity with land use regulations.

■ The present Visual Arts Centre was also in conformity; no changes were required to land use regulations.

Reasons for Change in Use

■ The original grain mill use was long discontinued.

■ The abandoned building was hazardous and subject to possible vandalism.

■ The land use regulations are restrictive due to the flood plain; not many other uses are permissible.

■ The area was in need of a Visual Arts Centre, presently the only one of its kind in the area.

■ An established organization requested the use of the building.

■ The project is feasible on this site because it:
- has good local/regional accessibility
- meets parking requirements – one space/ten people
- has a natural setting – creek valley
- was in an adaptable building with a large window area and 'open' spans
- was financially feasible (with the municipal operating subsidy)
- is in close proximity to houses, so that vandalism or theft from the building would be noticed

Process of Land Use Change and the Impacts

Process

When Newcastle acquired the building from the Rotary Club, the Town wanted a suitable use requiring minimal expenditure. At the same time the Arts Resource Group of Newcastle was seeking a location to centralize its activities in an Arts Centre.

The arts group approached the Town Council with their proposal to convert the mill into an Arts Resource Centre. With no requirement to amend land use regulations, and because of the low costs involved Council instituted the proposed use.

Considerable volunteer labour was used in the conversion.

Impacts

With the creation of an Arts Resource Centre the town assumed an annual cost of about $13,000 for operations and maintenance,

including the salary of a part-time coordinator employed by the Centre. The money is provided as an "arts grant" under the town recreation budget. Financial support is also provided by membership fees, the Ontario Arts Council, and the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture.

In the future the Town must also assume costs for upgrading of fire protection and fire exits because of the enforcement of new Fire Code standards.

The Centre has added a new cultural dimension locally and regionally through the art gallery, art rental service and art classes. The art school has opened a new channel for artistically inclined people while increasing the employment potential for art teachers and sellers of art.

The Centre draws visitors to Newcastle from Metropolitan Toronto and the surrounding areas for special events.

Significance of the Re-use Example

The preservation of this turn of the Century industrial building is significant in that it provides a link to the history of the area.

At the same time the building provides space for the visual arts and is now the local focal point for this type of activity.

The immediate surroundings, a creek valley and park, are an appropriate setting for the project. In addition, the particular use of the site is appropriate because it does not create adverse environmental impacts.

Lessons from the Re-use Example

This example illustrates that the re-use of buildings, whether originally public or not, can meet certain community requirements. Before attempting such conversions some factors should be considered.

Community groups which are involved in re-use activity should be well organized and well financed to maintain the building in good condition. In this case the Arts Group was re-organized for this purpose at an early stage and employs both professional and volunteer staff, partially funded by the Municipality.

Municipalities should be prepared, through experts, to assume long-term maintenance responsibilities. Otherwise, maintenance of the structure and the heating system may be neglected.

The reponsibility for the maintenance items affecting the applicability of liability insurance should be clearly defined. An example is the clearing of snow and ice in pedestrian areas.

Low cost buildings of this nature are useful as proving grounds for testing the viability of new activities. Costs will have been minimal if the activity proves unsuccessful. If the activity is successful then a new or greatly renovated facility can be considered.

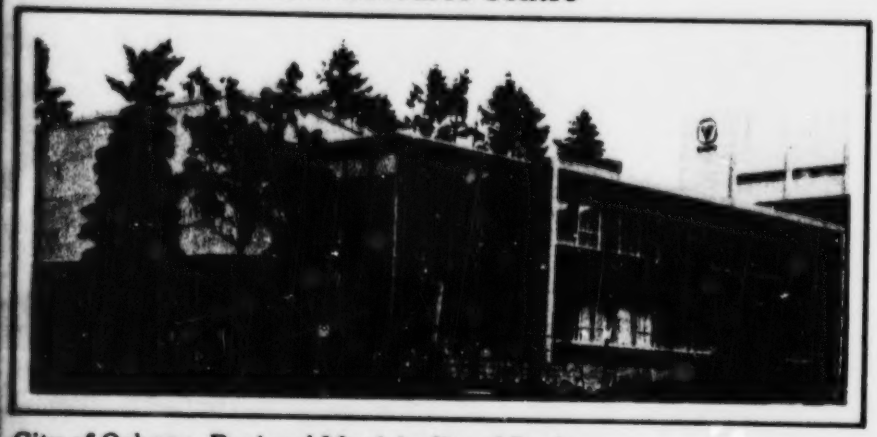
This case also illustrates the value in maintaining a positive relationship with nearby residents. Vigilant neighbours of this project are valuable in discouraging vandalism.

The natural setting is appropriate for this project because many of the pictures displayed reflect natural settings similar to the Soper Creek Valley.

Acknowledgements

Mr. D. Johnston, Chief Administrative Officer
Mrs. E. Haunsberger, Visual Arts Centre Administrator
Mr. B. Fanning, Community Services Director
Mr. E. Pella, Planner

Police Station to Arts Resource Centre



City of Oshawa, Regional Municipality of Durham

Description of Project

The Arts Resource Centre is the rehearsal and meeting location of various community and arts groups. It occupies the former Oshawa Police Station and courtroom. The building provides a well used amenity consistent with the active interest in the arts in Oshawa.

The police station was built in 1952 and converted to a centre for arts groups in 1973. It features concrete block construction with exterior masonry facing and a steel structure. Concrete floors are covered with carpet or tiles, with terrazzo flooring in the entrance areas. The building has two storeys and a basement with a total of approximately 1065 m^2 of useable space. Until recently the building was considered to be inflexible in its wall positioning, and has largely retained the original room layout.

Previous Uses and Owners

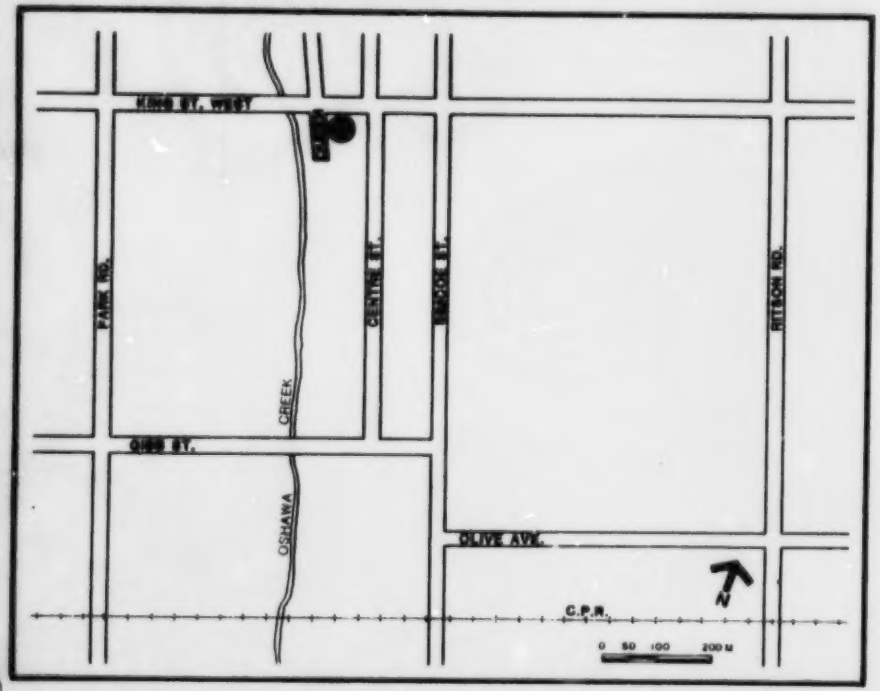
- Originally used as a police station, courtroom and holding centre for prisoners.
- Constructed and still owned by the City of Oshawa.
- Redesignated by Oshawa City Council as an Arts Resource Centre in 1973 containing:
  - a small theatre and rehearsal hall in the former courtroom – used by Oshawa dramatic and musical groups
  - storage space used by community and arts groups
  - offices for Information Oshawa, Arts Centre Action, Oshawa Symphony Association, Oshawa Folk Arts Council, and the Oshawa and District Council for the Arts
  - meeting rooms
  - music storage room for Oshawa Symphony
  - Mental Health Association drop-in centre
- Part of the Civic Complex which also includes the City Hall, Library, and Art Gallery.
- Downtown Central Business District setting immediately west of the Oshawa City Hall, facing the Municipal parking lot.
- Surrounding land uses include:
  - parking and commercial shopping 150 m west
  - building supply yard adjacent to the north
  - municipal parking adjacent to the south
  - library 100 m south
  - City Hall adjacent to the east
- Large paved parking area with two street entrances.

Permitted Uses – Official Plan, Zoning By-law

- Official Plan of the former Oshawa Planning Area as amended (now in the Region of Durham) – the site is designated as 'Central Business District' which allows for the major concentration of retail, office, service and institutional uses in the Region of Durham.
- City of Oshawa Zoning By-law (No. 3415) – the site is zoned R-4 allowing for a variety of land uses such as: apartment-hotel; art gallery; auditorium or concert hall; institution; etc. This zoning reflects permissible uses in conformity with the Official Plan 'Central Business District' designation.

- The previous use, police station/court house, was in conformity with the Official Plan and Zoning By-law.
- The present use, Arts Resource Centre, is also in conformity; thus no amendments were required.

Site Location: City of Oshawa



Reasons for Change in Use

- The original police station and court house uses were discontinued due to the introduction of Regional Government in 1972.
- The building was fairly new, substantial and sound.
- Keeping the building empty (without revenue) could not have recouped any of the maintenance expenses.
- The possibility for the building re-use was expressed by various groups including the present users.
- Land use regulations were permissive enough to allow the change without obstacles.
- The location and building are suited to the present use because of:
  - good local/regional accessibility
  - meeting parking requirements (by sharing the City Hall parking area "after hours")
  - its civic centre setting which is ideal for the arts
  - the building being adaptive for the present use especially the courtroom used as rehearsal space and a theatre
  - the financial feasibility – low renovating costs and minimal rent required

Process of Land Use Change and the Impacts

Process

When the Police Department moved to another location, the City was left with a vacant building. At this point several civic groups approached City Council to inform them of their space requirements and the suitability of the former police building to meet their needs.

City Council examined all proposals and decided to convert the building into an Arts Resource Centre, in which space would be made available to groups involved in arts-related activities.

Impacts

There was no change required to land use regulations thus allowing City workers to upgrade the building immediately.

The City's Community Services Department subsequently assumed responsibility for long-term maintenance and operating costs of approximately $12,000 per year (1974 to 1982).

Additional future costs will be encountered to upgrade fire protection and exiting. At the same time the public access and the theatre backstage facilities may be improved.

The Centre has met the interim demand for arts-related space without substantial expenditure by either the arts groups or the City. The average annual costs to arts users has been about $6,000 (1974-1981).

The conversion of this building has added to cultural activity in Oshawa, as well as increasing the utilization of City owned property.

Significance of the Re-use Example

This building is typical of buildings that are made redundant where regional government has been implemented. The building is modern and is not a "heritage" building. The new use is related to the expanding need for the creative use of leisure time.

Lessons from the Case Study Example

Certain community needs can be met by using existing public buildings. Such buildings may be in good condition and require relatively small expenditures when preparing them for their next use. In this case an Arts Resource Centre met the increased demand for this type of community space in Oshawa.

Municipalities should assess the fire safety and structure of buildings at the outset. In this case the building was thought of as a temporary facility, and the structural assessment was not made. As a result, some walls which could have been removed were left intact.

The adaptive re-use of this building has helped Oshawa to accommodate groups offering civic benefit.

Acknowledgements

Susan E. Neal, Recreation Division, Community Services Department, City of Oshawa.
Evan G. Rodgers, Department of Planning and Development, Policy Planning Branch, City of Oshawa.

Municipal Offices to Library

City of Sault Ste. Marie, District of Algoma

Description of Project

The Korah Branch Library is a community library occupying the former Township of Korah Municipal Building. Constructed in 1958, the building is a two-storey yellow brick structure with a flat roof and a split-level entrance. It provides about 335 m^2 of useable library space on two large open floors.

Previous Uses and Owners

- The structure was originally used as the Municipal Building for the former Township of Korah.
- It was constructed and owned by the former Township.
- The building was vacated in 1965 when the Township of Korah was amalgamated into the City of Sault Ste. Marie.

Present Uses and Owner

- The building is presently used as a Sault Ste. Marie Branch Library, administered by the Sault Ste. Marie Library Board.
- Facilities consist of a children's department on the lower floor with space for class groups, general circulation on the upper floor, a combined office-workroom-lunchroom and washrooms. The main checkout desk is on the upper floor and serves both departments.
- The ownership of the building was automatically transferred to the City of Sault Ste. Marie during amalgamation in 1965.
- Located on Second Line West between Nichol Avenue and Edison Avenue.
- Suburban residential setting on a main east-west arterial road.
- Surrounding land uses are predominantly residential and institutional (schools).
- Abundant parking space with three access driveways.

Permitted Use – Official Plan, Zoning By-law

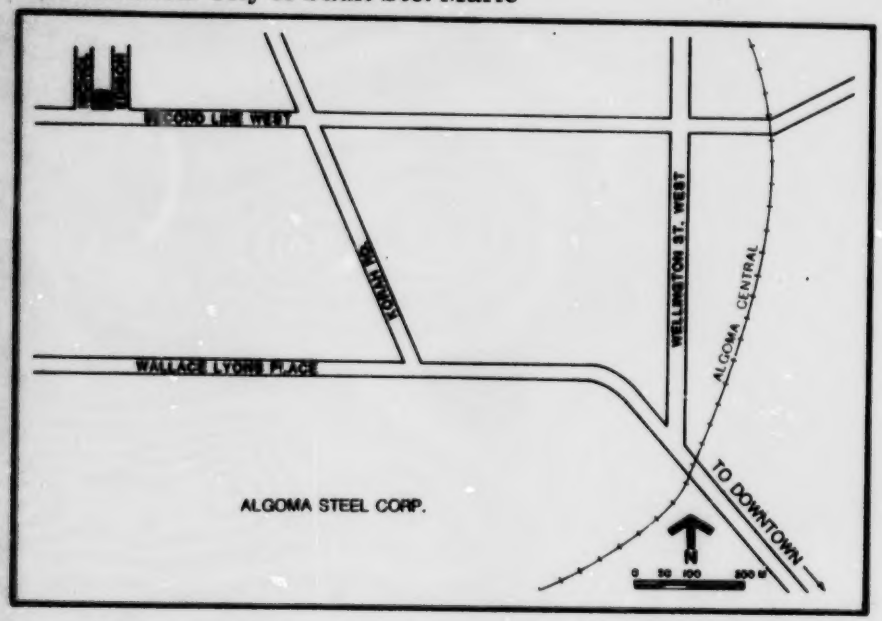
- Under the City of Sault Ste. Marie Official Plan the site is designated as residential permitting the library use.
- Under the City of Sault Ste. Marie Zoning By-law the site is zoned R6 permitting residential use and service institutions such as libraries.
- Both the former municipal building use and the present branch library are permitted under land use regulations; thus no amendments were required.

Reasons for Change in Use

- In 1965 the Township of Korah was amalgamated with and became part of the City of Sault Ste. Marie; thus municipal functions were no longer performed in this building.
- A library was needed in this area of the City.
- The building was easily adaptable to library use.
- The project is feasible on this site because of:
  - good access

- abundant parking
- proximity to community and local schools
- low conversion costs

Site Location: City of Sault Ste. Marie



Process of Land Use Change and the Impacts

Process

The Korah area Aldermen on the Sault Ste. Marie Council pointed out to Council that a library was needed and could be located in the former township municipal building. Council agreed and instructed the Library Board to convert the building to the new use. No changes were required to land use regulations.

Impacts

The City of Sault Ste. Marie assumed responsibility for the building through the Library Board and was responsible for the approximate $10,000 renovation costs as well as all operating costs. These were about $80,000 in 1983.

No design consultants were used for this conversion.

The library has provided a local learning centre for adults and school groups. Its location provides good vehicular and pedestrian access. There was no disruption of the surrounding community, and library service was introduced.

Significance of Re-use Example

This re-use is significant for several reasons. First, the library use is suited to the existing municipal building and the location. Second, the re-use resulted in only a minimal cost to the municipality. Third, this type of conversion is easily possible in a modern building of this nature.

Lessons from the Re-use Example

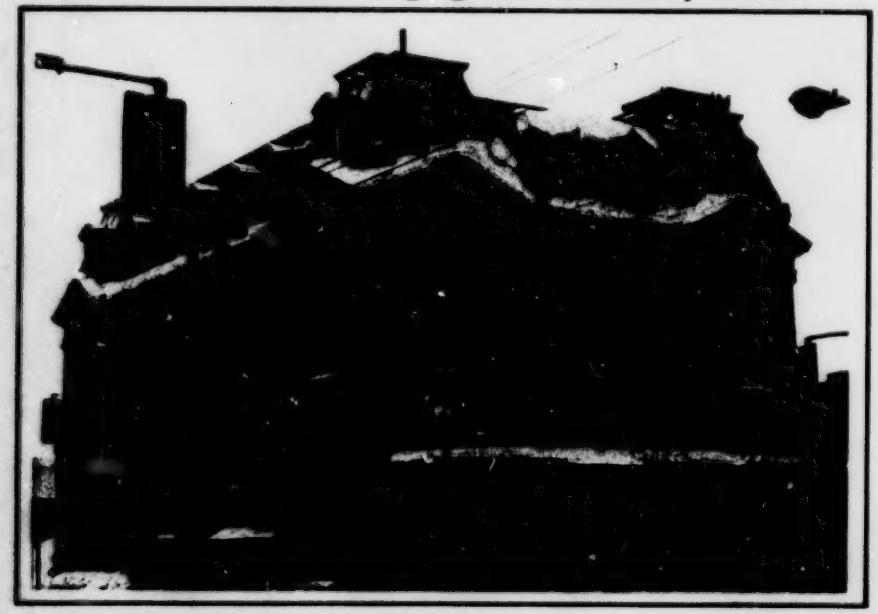
The example illustrates that the re-use of public buildings can sometimes be accomplished with minimal expenditure.

The example also illustrates the advantages of converting existing institutional buildings for institutional re-use. This may avoid negative land use impacts on the surrounding area.

Acknowledgements

Mr. Joseph E. Sniezek, Deputy Planning Director.
Mr. Frederick Konkin, City Treasurer.

Post Office to Seniors' Lodging and Community Centre



City of Owen Sound, County of Grey

Description of Project

Albert Place is a lodging place and community centre mainly for senior citizens. The former Post Office building also contains a cafeteria open to the general public. The building has been designated as a heritage site and maintains the original character of the downtown area.

Constructed in 1907 and converted to its present use in 1980, the three storeys and basement provide about 1190 m^2 of useable space. This prominent building in the centre of Owen Sound has exterior walls of stone, with reinforced concrete floors. The architecture is representative of the impressive public buildings of the Edwardian era.

Previous Uses and Owner

- The structure was originally used as the Owen Sound Post Office as well as the Customs and Inland Revenue Offices.
- Originally constructed and owned by the Federal Government.
- The building was vacated in 1957.
- The building then served a variety of commercial uses including a bank and medical offices.
- Sold by Architectural Properties Limited in 1980.

Present Uses and Owners

- The building is presently used as a retirement lodging facility and community centre containing:
  - basement – games room, snack bar and resting area
  - ground floor – restaurant, rooms for social functions such as dances, films, bingo, etc.
  - second and third floors – 50 bed retirement home, offices for visiting physicians and other health practitioners
- The building was purchased in 1980 by Mr. John Cotterell, an Owen Sound businessman and developer.
- Located at the southwest corner of 9th Street East and 3rd Avenue East, a downtown setting
- Blends with the historical character of the area.
- The surrounding land uses include:
  - downtown commercial: restaurant, general retail, publishing, broadcasting
  - institutional: new post office; church

Permitted Use – Official Plan, Zoning By-law

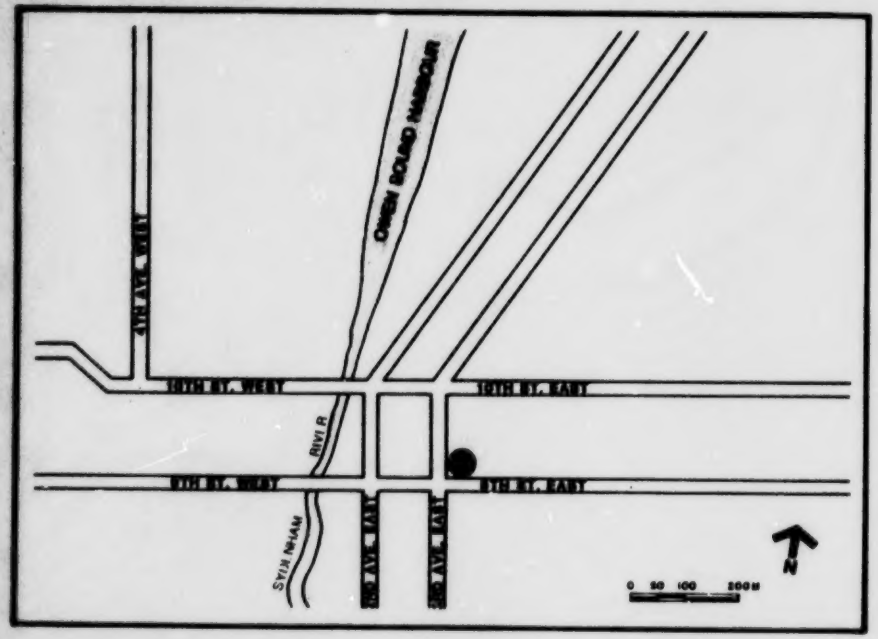
- The Official Plan for the City of Owen Sound designates the site area as 'Commercial Land Use.'
- The implementing Zoning By-law has rezoned, by amendment, the

subject property to Commercial 1-10 permitting most commercial uses as well as a boarding house, provided that all bedrooms are located entirely above the ground floor.

Reasons for Change in Use

- The building was vacant in 1980.
- The Owen Sound area was in need of an additional retirement centre and the new owner had experience in this field.
- The location is suited to the new use because of:
  - the downtown location and good access
  - amenities for seniors in close proximity
  - the adaptablity of the building to the new use

Site Location: City of Owen Sound



Process of Land Use Change and Impacts

Process

The old Post Office had been used for commercial purposes and had been privately owned since 1957. Mr. John Cotterell purchased the building in 1980 for approximately $240,000 in order to provide an additional retirement centre in the City of Owen Sound.

The buyer then submitted an application for rezoning to permit a senior citizens housing complex for approximately 50 persons. The planning department agreed with the zoning application although there is no on-site parking or open space.

Despite these drawbacks, the City of Owen Sound Planning Board recommended that the zoning change be permitted and City Council passed the required by-law in 1981.

Impacts

The City of Owen Sound has been provided with an additional senior citizens complex in a convenient location in the central business district. The City incurred no costs for the centre, as all costs were covered by the owner.

The City has been assured that this heritage building will be maintained in its original condition, without City expenditure. There was minimal government involvement although some heritage grants might have been provided had these been requested by the owner.

The City derives tax revenue from the present use. In addition, the Centre provides employment opportunities for area residents.

Significance of Re-use Example

There is a demand for accommodation for senior citizens. There is also a trend toward the preservation of historic buildings. This example is significant because of a heritage building being involved in that re-use.

The old Post Office in Owen Sound plays a role in maintaining the original character of its surrounding area. Its imposing facade reminds passerby of an interesting architectural era.

This re-use example was possible only with compliance of the City in relaxing its normal zoning requirement for parking and open space.

Lessons from the Re-use Example

In this case, the owner required a zoning amendment. This required a compromise of normal parking and open space considerations to achieve the desired re-use, when compared to new development. However, the project did meet city redevelopment standards.

City Councils may wish to encourage the re-use of buildings for seniors accommodation. In Owen Sound this has proved successful.

Acknowledgements

Mr. S.G. Hyndman, Planning Director.
Mr. J. Cotterell, businessman, developer.

Post Office to Commercial Offices

Town of Perth, County of Lanark

Description of Project

Built in 1931, the post office building became obsolete for its use in 1971. Purchased by its present owner because of its central location and prestigious design, it offers a flexible open span design suitable for office use and has ready public access from the street. The building has approximately 560 m^2 of floor space in two storeys and a basement.

Previous Uses and Owners

- Originally used as a Post Office and Federal offices until 1971.
- Stood vacant for two years.
- Purchased privately and renovated by the present owner in 1973.
- Occupied by an insurance and real estate agency, a lawyer's office and other rental offices until 1983.

Present Uses and Owner

- Owned by Crain and Schooley Insurance and Real Estate Companies.
- Now entirely occupied by that firm.
- The building is an integral part of the downtown business district, occupying a key location.
- Located on the main street across from the Town Hall and the former Carnegie Library.
- Backs on park land/canal.
- Parking is available for ten cars at the rear of the building.

Permitted Use – Official Plan, Zoning By-law

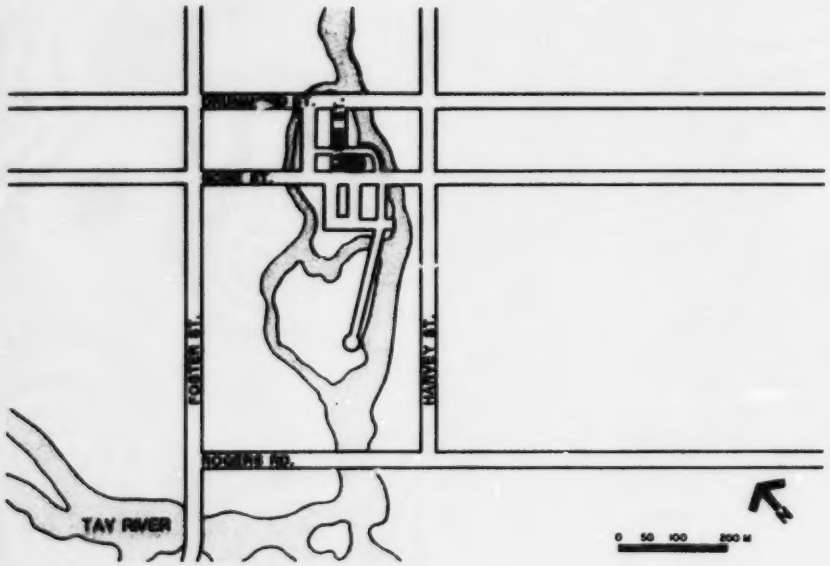
- The Official Plan designates the site as 'Central Business District.'
- Under the Zoning By-law, the site is zoned C1 Commercial which permits most commercial and institutional uses.
- There was no zoning by-law in effect at the time of the building conversion.
- No changes were required to land use regulations.

Reasons for Change in Use

- The Post Office size became inadequate when mail delivery was instituted in Perth. Loading and parking requirements were also inadequate.
- Requirements of other Federal Government offices also increased.
- The expanding real estate and insurance firm saw the value of the former Post Office building for their own use and for rental office space.
- The project is feasible on this site because:
  - it has a prominent downtown location
  - the Post Office building is a town landmark

- the building was easily converted to the new use
- there is a low vacancy rate for office space in Perth compared with many communities, so that rental of commercial space was feasible

Site Location: Town of Perth



Process of Land Use Change and Impacts

Process

In 1971 the building was offered for sale to the Town of Perth by the Federal Government.

The Town, however, had no requirement for the building and as a result it stood vacant for two years. It was sold to the present owner at market value.

All renovation costs were assumed by the owner in order to convert the building into commercial office space. There was no municipal involvement required to preserve this building.

Impacts

The use of this building for public commercial purposes has added a source of municipal tax revenue and has not required municipal financing to preserve an important landmark. As well, the new use retains employment in the Central Business District.

The re-use has created some demand on municipal parking in the downtown area; however, since parking for the Post Office use was already inadequate, no real change exists.

The building is maintained in good condition including the original landscaping and the exterior appearance. Even the flag pole is used as originally intended. Built in 1931, the building is a good early example of 1930's and 1940's Canadian Post Office architecture. It also maintains the traditional continuity of the main street facade through its scale, siting, and materials.

Significance of Re-use Example

This example illustrates that public buildings can sometimes be retained with little or no public involvement. In this case it is significant that the Town gained an added source of revenue while maintaining an important historical link.

The building now provides a central location for commercial offices reflecting Perth's intention to centralize development in its core.

Lessons from this Case Study

In allowing public buildings to be purchased privately, municipal councils may wish to consider the probable intentions of purchasers. In this case the buyer has successfully retained the original exterior form of the building.

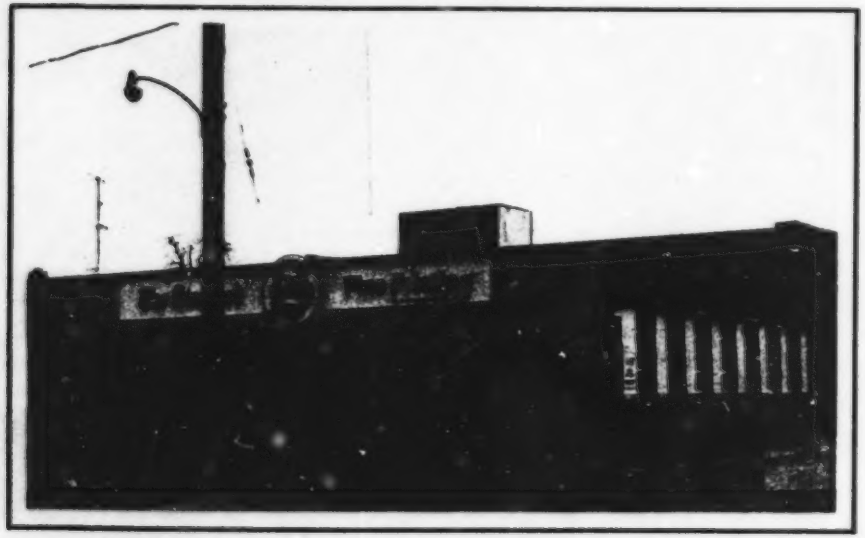
In the case of the Carnegie Library across the street, which was largely destroyed by fire, the Town made an agreement for preservation of the facade. The new owner received a subsidy from Heritage Canada in converting that building into office space. The Post Office building, on the other hand, was in good condition and did not require government assistance.

This case study example illustrates a 'minimal involvement' approach in the re-use of public buildings. The building, although privately owned, retains an appearance of importance, and the private investors respect its significance.

Acknowledgements

Mr. T.G. Kent, Clerk.
Mr. S. Fournier, Planner.

Public Works Building to Printing Plant



City of St. Catharines, Regional Municipality of Niagara

Description of Project

The St. Catharines Standard newspaper operates its Fine Printing Division in the buildings of the former City of St. Catharines Public Works Yard. The main building features a red brick exterior, a flat roof, and extensive window areas. Built in 1952, it offers approximately 1,670 m^2 of useable space for the printing operations. Two other buildings contain garage space.

Previous Uses and Owners

- Originally used as the City of St. Catharines Public Works Yard.
- Owned at that time by the City of St. Catharines.
- Vacated by the City in 1980.

Present Uses and Owner

- The building was purchased from the Municipality by The St. Catharines Standard Limited in 1982.
- The structure is presently used to house a commercial printing plant and offices.
- Located on Welland Avenue just east of Court Street (see map).
- Welland Avenue is a major downtown street.
- Surrounding land uses consist of:
  - commercial area to the west
  - low density residential area to the north
  - high density residential area to the south
  - low density residential area to the east
- Adequate fenced parking area with two entrance points (see photograph).

Permitted Use – Official Plan, Zoning By-law

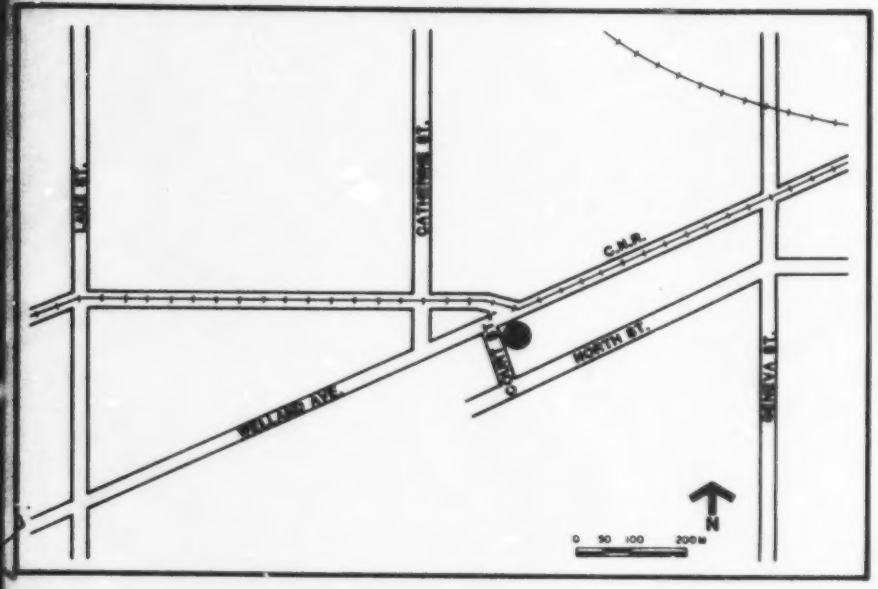
- The Official Plan of the St. Catharines Planning Area, designates this site as 'Neighbourhood-Residential Use,' with an RB classification stating that the area is appropriate for higher densities to house non-family households (i.e. without children). City Council has also amended the Official Plan to permit a printing and publishing house, and/or business office on this property.
- The property is zoned 'Business Commercial' which permits many forms of commercial and residential land uses, but limits the use of this property to a printing and publishing house and/or business offices.

Reasons for Change in Use

- The City constructed a new public works yard.
- The vacant old yard and buildings were subject to vandalism and were hazardous to children from the surrounding community.
- The building was a financial liability to the City.

- The St. Catharines Standard Limited needed another facility to accommodate expansion at minimal cost to the company.
- The project is feasible on this site because:
  - it has good local and regional accessibility
  - it exceeds minimum parking requirements
  - the building was easily converted
  - it is financially feasible for both the owner and the City
  - there is room for expansion

Site Location: City of St. Catharines



Process of Land Use Change and Impacts

Process

When the City of St. Catharines Public Works Yard moved to a new location, Council preferred to sell the older facility rather than to find alternative municipal uses.

At the same time, The St. Catharines Standard Limited was expanding its operations and for economic reasons required an adaptable existing building in St. Catharines.

Inquiries were made by the Company and a purchase price of approximately $225,000 was agreed to on condition that Official Plan and zoning amendments be passed to permit printing and office use on the site. The price was within a market value range established by an independent appraiser.

City Council agreed, after debate and public meetings, to amend the land use regulations and the purchase was finalized.

Impacts

Compared with the original use, the new use is more compatible with the surrounding area. Its operations are quiet and clean.

The re-use has also been economically beneficial to the City. Previously the vacant complex required city money for its upkeep, and was subject to vandalism. Now the facility provides tax revenue.

After a renovation expenditure of approximately $150,000 by the owners, the printing plant now provides convenient downtown employment.

Although the surrounding area is residential, minimal changes to the land use regulations were required. There was little opposition from area residents.

Significance of the Re-use Example

This example represents an improvement in an industrial land use through the adaptive re-use of municipal buildings. The original public works yard was not so compatible with the surrounding community as is the present printing plant and office use.

The re-use has established a source of civic revenue through taxes, and does not require municipal funds.

The example illustrates the industrial re-use of a civic works yard and buildings to provide local employment.

Lessons from the Case Study Example

A municipality may sometimes wish to actively promote the sale of

buildings it no longer requires. Target purchasers may be firms which require minimal renovation costs. This could maintain an employment base in the community, as in this example, or perhaps provide a 'proving ground' for new enterprises.

Basic urban planning principles have to be considered and maintained. In St. Catharines, Official Plan and Zoning amendments were required. These were possible because the project does not adversely affect the existing pattern of urban development, and in fact provides benefits.

Acknowledgements

Mr. W.F. Cline, Realty and Property Manager, Supplies and Services Department.
Mr. E. Bateman, Manager, The Standard Fine Printing
Mr. K. Gonyou, Senior Planning Technician, Planning Department.

Findings

The case studies are diverse but have common characteristics. This section points out these similarities as well as conclusions which are specific to particular examples. The findings form the basis for Section 3, "Impacts of Building Re-Use" and Section 4 "Considerations for Building Re-Use."

The buildings studied can be classed as several types: historic buildings and buildings of architectural merit; old buildings which are landmarks; and newer buildings in sound condition.

The distinction between buildings of merit and other old buildings is sometimes difficult to define. Buildings of merit require sensitive architectural treatment. Some should be restored along with the conversion to a new use. These buildings of merit among the case studies include:

- Aylmer, Town Hall/Opera House to Library
- Kenora, Post Office to Municipal Offices
- Gravenhurst, Opera House and Town Hall to Theatre/Banquet and Community Hall
- Owen Sound, Post Office to Senior Citizens' Lodging
- Newcastle (Bowmanville), Grain Mill to Visual Arts Centre

Two of these projects, in Aylmer and Kenora, were conversions of very significant buildings. These examples involved restoration of the buildings to the original appearance and for this reason benefitted from senior government funding. The two projects were also the most controversial among those studied, as the buildings were threatened with demolition.

The other building conversions by municipalities were undertaken to save money compared with new buildings.

The "after" uses in the case studies represent a variety of uses which can be accommodated in obsolete buildings. These include:

- traditional municipal functions: municipal offices, libraries, police station
- accommodation for the arts: "little theatre" performing and set building areas, music rehearsal space, arts studios, meeting rooms, offices, and theatres

- accommodation for charitable groups: meeting rooms and offices
- office space, for commercial use
- municipal storage
- senior citizens' housing and cafeteria
- banquet facilities and community meeting rooms
- specialized activity rooms: model railway club; air cadets

The expanding needs for the visual and performing arts (leisure activities) is apparent in the examples.

It was expected that more use by senior citizens' groups would be discovered. The arts facilities, libraries, banquet rooms, meeting rooms, and some of the charitable community service groups housed, however, are used by senior citizens and in some cases are run by them. Therefore, while seniors housing was not prevalent, support facilities for that group was evident.

In general, the groups occupying the converted buildings can operate only in inexpensive accommodation. Some of the activities were considered impossible without this form of "subsidy." Costs for the users were in some cases, minimized by:

- proceeding with minimal renovation only
- using volunteer labour for renovation
- using municipal staff for maintenance
- obtaining an operating subsidy

Indirect subsidies are also possible. These might include:

- low sale price for the site or building (not found in the examples investigated)
- zoning provisions to allow the use proposed with increased densities or with reduced parking requirements

Several positive benefits were evident. The positive aspects of the re-use involved the desirable location of the new activities, relatively low costs for community services, augmentation of leisure or charitable activities, tourist attraction, and employment. The re-use of older buildings also allowed the viability of some activities to be tested before extensive expenditures were made on permanent accommodation. In addition, several important older buildings were saved.

Few negative impacts were found from the case studies. The negative impacts were usually related to makeshift accommodation due to minimal expenditure, or difficult building layout. In some cases extensive further renovation will be needed for fire safety.

There were few negative influences on parking or traffic, since the buildings had already been extensively occupied before the conversion. Sometimes downtown parking was augmented by the acquisition of the site, as in Cobourg.

The retention of the older building examples always had a positive visual effect on the neighbourhood. This was true of the private re-use project in Perth as well as in the public examples. In St. Catharines the conversion of the Works Yard to a clean industrial use was a neighbourhood improvement, and more acceptable to residents than the construction of apartments, as allowed in the previous zoning by-law, might have been.

Most of the examples illustrated that once the buildings were declared surplus, users were readily found, provided the cost was low. Few of the examples stood empty for long. In Perth, where there was no public use needing accommodation, a private buyer was found by the Federal Government. Exceptions were the historic buildings in Aylmer and Kenora. In both cases, strong citizens' groups insisted, against the initial wishes of Council, that the buildings be preserved.

The discussion of the impacts of the re-use of these buildings is presented in Chapter 3.

3
Impacts of Building Re-use

Introduction

The re-use of public buildings can lead to a number of impacts. Although some negative effects have resulted, the majority have been positive. In this section the impacts and the groups affected are discussed.

The groups affected by re-use activity include:
- municipalities and other government organizations
- user groups — private business, community groups or individuals
- the surrounding community

The impacts of re-use are presented in four major categories:
- Urban Planning
- Economic/Financial
- Social and Cultural
- Administrative and Other

The following are the impacts which could occur through building re-use, as found in the case studies. The impacts are also set out in the Impact Summary Table at the end of Chapter 3.

Urban Planning Impacts

In the majority of cases examined, the existing land use regulations at the time of the conversion have accommodated the re-use project.

There have been conscious efforts at insuring minimal disruption of overall planning goals and objectives. Re-use has generally required neither official plan nor zoning by-law amendments.

There were, however, examples that did require changes in planning designations. Land use regulations were amended through normal

procedures to allow the new uses. These changes were minor and did not conflict with primary municipal objectives as stated in the Official Plans.

The following are the impacts as identified in the case studies:

1
In some of the examples the neighbourhood has been improved by the change in land use. In St. Catharines the printing plant is considered more desirable by residents than the previous public works yard, and more desirable than the apartment buildings that would otherwise have been permitted.

2
In the case of a heritage building or landmark building in a central area, the retention of the building was very important to the urban atmosphere and scale of the surroundings.

3
While parking provisions for the buildings were sometimes considered inadequate, the demand for parking in the immediate area was usually not increased by the conversion. This is because most of the previous uses required a similar amount of parking. In the case of Cobourg, the site was acquired mainly to provide a public parking lot, with the building as a secondary consideration. Downtown parking is thus augmented.

4
In the Owen Sound private senior citizens' lodging example, the City had to approve reduced zoning standards, still consistent with its redevelopment standards, for on-site amenities and parking to make the use possible. This allowed the residents to live in a convenient, central and pedestrian oriented location.

5
In the study, no negative effects on neighbourhoods, parking, transportation or traffic were found.

6
Almost all of the examples were in convenient and appropriate locations.

7
Where the re-use activities needed Official Plan or Zoning By-law amendments, the nature of the re-use was such that planning amendments were minor.

8
There was considerable opposition to the destruction of some of the buildings which were eventually re-used. Public participation was directed towards finding ways to save and re-use the buildings.

Economic/Financial Impacts

In both large and small projects, economic and financial impacts have resulted because of re-use activity. These are summarzied below:

1
In most of the examples the re-use of public buildings was economical in actual cost compared with the construction of new buildings.

2
Often the groups housed, such as amateur arts societies and charitable groups, could not afford newer buildings. They would have required another form of subsidy instead of inexpensive accommodation.

3
In the case of heritage buildings requiring restoration, the costs of the conversion were high, sometimes comparable with new accommodation. Costs of restoration were often partially offset through grants from the Ontario Heritage Foundation and other sources.

4
Some activities provide indirect economic benefits by attracting tourists. Examples include some of the arts exhibitions and dramatic performances.

5
Some of the buildings themselves add to the atmosphere of the community and become tourist attractions in themselves.

6
The St. Catharines Works Yard provides an example of a sale of land and buildings to a commercial enterprise to retain jobs within the municipality.

7
The St. Catharines printing plant, the Owen Sound senior citizens' lodging, and the Perth Old Post Office used as a regional insurance

agency, all provide examples of additional assessment being provided to the municipality.

8

Long-term and short-term maintenance has had to be undertaken for older buildings retained by municipalities. The responsibility for tasks and funding has required clear agreements between the municipalities and tenants.

9

The use of older buildings by community groups has often provided recreational services that might not otherwise have been available except at a higher cost to the municipality. This is because the semi-autonomous groups collect their own dues and make use of their own volunteer labour.

10

Older buildings allow a trial period of accommodation to test the need and viability of a community group before a new facility need be constructed, i.e. performing an "incubator" role.

11

In the Cobourg and some of the other examples, the rental structure is based on the incomes of the user groups. Some extra revenue is obtained from private rental of commercial office space.

12

Nearly all the examples of re-use projects occupied by private or community groups were subsidized by the municipality either directly or indirectly:

- through municipal staff labour
- through the municipal budget
- by reducing parking or zoning standards for privately owned projects

Reduction in the sale price of sites was not encountered in the examples studied.

13

More extensive renovation expenditure may now be necessary to improve fire safety and fire-exiting from some of the buildings, due to enforcement of the revised Ontario Fire Code.

Social and Cultural Impacts

In re-using some buildings certain social and cultural impacts resulted:

1

The retention of historic buildings and interesting landmarks has provided communities with links to their past.

2

The retention of buildings has also preserved the scale and atmosphere of the central areas of those communities in a way that is often not possible with new buildings.

3

In the case of the two "designated" historic buildings, very active citizen involvement was instrumental in saving the buildings and arousing cultural consciousness.

4

The growing needs of leisure-related and in particular arts-related activities was evident in the re-use of several of the buildings.

5

The buildings provided for charitable needs, often drop-in centres, or charitable group headquarters.

6

Some of the premises are viewed by the users as only temporary and requiring upgrading. Some of the building layouts are inconveniently arranged and would need extensive further renovation to be really adequate. Most of the buildings cannot serve the handicapped well because there are no elevators or ramps.

Administrative Impacts

Although they are not of major proportion, depending upon the groups involved in the re-use, certain administrative impacts can result:

1

In general, it was found that the re-use of buildings requires administrative time not just during the renovation process but in the long-term. This is not usually, however, a requirement needing additional staff.

2

It was found that where inadequate initial assessment and planning of the building took place, there were more administrative problems because of inconvenient facilities for the user groups.

3

Minimal civic involvement, as in Perth, may provide private sector

employment, sensitive re-use of the building, and assessment; or, while not borne out in the case studies, the building could be badly renovated or lost.

4

The rental fees, where applicable, were set to ensure the success of projects for community groups. This requires administrative consideration.

5

The definition of maintenance responsibility between the municipality and building users was required to ensure:

- public safety
- continual maintenance of the building fabric and the heating systems, to reduce long-term costs
- building maintenance required to keep insurance policies in effect

6

Many public buildings are maintained by municipal staff. This is a necessary cost and is generally beneficial in keeping the building in good repair, compared to leaving the total responsibility to user groups.

Impact Summary Table
Impacts and Those Affected by Building Re-use

Those Affected by Impacts	Urban Planning Impacts	Economic/Financial Impacts	Social and Cultural Impacts	Administrative and Other Impacts
MUNICIPALITY OTHER GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS	Documents –Official Plan amendments –Zoning By-law amendments –Parking By-law amendments Physical –building improvements – renovation or expansion –improved parking, or parking shortages –access improvements required e.g. traffic, driveways, ramps –improved urban atmosphere through building preservation, especially heritage sites	Public Re-use –re-use often more economical than constructing new buildings –rental or sale is possible –long-term maintenance expenditures may be greater than those for a new building –subsidies for restoration possible –tourist potential Private Re-use –tax base increase –employment retention possible –tourist potential	–often expansion of social and cultural programs –some re-use preserves buildings or architectural/aesthetic/historic value	–addition or reduction of administrative responsibilities depending on whether the building is preserved or sold –sometimes difficulty in meeting fire standards
USER GROUPS municipal departments community groups private sector	–often convenient locations for permissible re-use	–often more economical than new building rental or construction –possible grant money e.g. heritage funds –often reasonable rental fees if renovation is minimal –possible volunteer labour –maintenance and heating costs may be higher than in a new building –possible tourism revenue	–additional social and cultural opportunities e.g. arts clubs, theatre, seniors drop-in, libraries –arousal of social consciousness through citizen involvement in renovation and maintenance –additional housing opportunities	–internal group or private business administration required –an understanding of municipal administration is needed (if applicable) –sometimes inconvenient floor plans and waste of effort in an old building –often greater freedom of activity in an older building
SURROUNDING COMMUNITY	–important building preserved –amenities often in convenient locations –preservation of community atmosphere –affected by land use changes –noise, traffic, nuisance reduced or increased	–possible spin-off business to surrounding community –local job opportunities –possible increased property values	–general upgrading of community through provision of social and cultural opportunities	–general understanding of the administrative implications of re-use activity in the community –reduction in vandalism compared with a vacant building

4
Considerations for Building Re-use

Introduction

The purpose of this section is to list the considerations in determining whether a building should be adapted to a new use. The considerations are based on the experiences of the smaller municipalities contacted throughout Ontario, most notably the ten case study examples dealt with in detail.

The considerations are discussed under four categories. They include:

Use Considerations
- need for the new use
- interim use
- secondary use

Building and Site Considerations
- suitability of the building
- architectural and historic value
- land use and planning implications
- site accessibility

Financial/Administrative Considerations
- financial implications
- administrative implications
- funding availability

Other Considerations
- tourist potential
- attitudes

The following text and "Summary Table" summarize the considerations to examine in determining the merit of changing the use of a building.

The re-use may be accomplished through several ownership arrangements. The public building may be:

- purchased by the municipality from other government levels, or given to the municipality
- sold by the municipality to others (public, private or charitable groups) with or without conditions on the re-use
- leased to others by the municipality
- retained by the municipality for its own use
- partially retained and partially leased to others by the municipality
- owned and managed by the municipality with short-term rental to others

The form of ownership should be appropriate to the new use proposed. It may affect the formal administrative arrangements with the occupants. The following considerations should be reviewed against the background of the several possible levels of municipal involvement.

The Use Considerations

Uses and Demand

Often there is an obvious use for the obsolete public building. At other times a definite use is not so obvious and potential uses must be compared and assessed. Sometimes potential uses come to light only after it is known that a building may become available.

There are several kinds of uses:

Municipal departments or services: libraries, police stations, municipal offices;

Recreational uses:

- provided by the municipality, such as community centres
- provided by volunteers for special interest groups, such as dramatic societies, visual arts exhibitions and studies, sometimes with municipal support
- museums

Charitable uses:

- space provided to volunteer societies

Revenue producing uses:

- commercial rental offices
- rental of halls, etc

Housing:

- public or private
- for special groups

Private use to provide employment or municipal assessment.

In all cases the need has to be demonstrated. This is straightforward for civic departments. For charitable or cultural groups the need for the proposed use and the stability of the group will need to be assessed. At the same time the ability to pay, affecting the degree of renovation which is appropriate, will need to be determined.

The considerations are:

- Is there a need for the service?
- Is the group offering the service financially stable and is it well organized?
- Is the group looking for space with minimum cost/minimum renovation and upkeep, or sophisticated/higher cost accommodation?

In one of the case studies, the tenant group was given funding under the recreation budget to hire a staff member. That ensured financial and organizational stability as well as the ability of the group to meet its cultural objectives.

If there is not a proven demand for a particular building use it may be worthwhile to "gamble" by placing the use in the unrenovated building at low cost, as a proving ground. Several of the case studies provided that opportunity. The consideration is:

- Would it be beneficial to use the building as a "proving ground" for the proposed use, at low cost?

If there is no public use for the building and no charitable/community groups are interested, the building could be demolished and the site sold, or the building could be sold intact. If the building is sold, questions to be considered include:

- Should the sale be conditional on maintaining or restoring the building?
- Will the user be able to meet the conditions of the sale, i.e. is there sufficient demand for the proposed service, and does the user have sufficient capital?
- Is the proposed use in the public interest?

- Is the proposed use consistent with the character of the building and the surrounding neighbourhood?

Interim Uses

It may be useful to assess the feasibility of using a building on an interim basis until a more permanent renovation is undertaken. Uncertainty of the need for the proposed use or its financial implications can lead user groups to seek inexpensive if somewhat inconvenient space for the short-term while the uncertainties are resolved. Often re-use buildings can serve user groups in this capacity.

Interim users may be municipalities expecting to construct new facilities later when funding is available. In Cobourg, the armouries served as a temporary municipal government headquarters while the historic Town Hall was being restored.

The same considerations may apply to businesses. Older buildings are cheaper than new ones and may aid new or experimental business enterprises to become established in the community. Industrial-type buildings, such as at municipal airports, might be reserved for such uses.

Secondary Uses

Many buildings are used for more than one purpose, with secondary uses occupying part of the building. This may involve the use of the building by a variety of tenants, or the use of part of the site for a municipal parking lot.

Where space permits, accommodating a number of community groups in one building can centralize community-oriented services.

Building and Site Considerations

Suitability of the Building

Some buildings are not structurally compatible with proposed new uses. A careful assessment of the suitability of a building is required to ensure a successful conversion.

The building should be assessed at the outset by experts for:

- Its architectural and historic value. This affects the appropriate use and the amount of renovation or restoration that should be considered. The assessment of the building structure and the renovation should be by experts in that field.
- Its ability to meet fire safety and exiting requirements for the uses proposed. This assessment is often done by fire authorities. The remedial work may be very extensive, especially for buildings used for public assembly. This may be true even when buildings are less than thirty years old.
- The structural type and capacity; and the location of bearing walls, columns, essential ducts, etc. One example studied had been erroneously thought to be a bearing wall structure, leading to inconvenience for the tenants over several years.

Whether the plan and the structure of the building will fit the re-use depends on obvious factors:

- Are spans, room dimensions, heights, and structural strengths appropriate for the proposed use?
- Will there be adequate natural ventilation, or can ventilation be installed?
- Will there be vibration or sound transmission problems?
- Can the use be carried out (e.g. set-building for dramatic groups) without damage to the building finishes?
- What would be involved to make the building accessible to the handicapped, as required in new public buildings?

If funding permits, the building can be designed for its eventual proposed use at the outset. Otherwise, interim renovation should be carried out in a way that allows flexibility in more extensive changes later.

Architectural and Historical Value

Many of the re-used buildings in Ontario are of some architectural or historic value. In such cases, uses compatible with the architectural or historic significance should be selected.

Buildings of this nature are often designated as heritage sites. Designated heritage buildings may qualify for restoration funding through grants for renovation.

Buildings of historic or architectural merit need to have that particular value clearly defined before a re-use proposal is accepted. The historical/architectural value may be:

- the entire building

- part of the building, usually the oldest part
- the exterior only
- certain parts of the interior -- entrance, grand chambers, etc.
- the original function of the building
- the scale of the building in the surroundings
- the landmark quality of the building

The uses chosen for the building should be compatible with the features to be preserved or restored.

The majority of older buildings have only marginal architectural or historic merit and would not qualify for restoration funding. These may, nevertheless, be worth keeping because they are landmarks important to the public or provide architectural character in the community. A greater degree of freedom is available in renovating such buildings, because they need not be "restored" to the original appearance.

Land Use and Planning Implications

The potential land use and planning impacts must be assessed. In most cases the municipality is involved in the project and compiles data essential to making decisions concerning land use regulations. Impacts to consider include parking, traffic, vehicular and pedestrian access, and compatibility with surrounding uses. For a residential re-use project, the open space, neighbourhood shopping, schools, safe routes to school and supporting community facilities need to be considered. The availability of sewers or water supply may need assessment if the intensity of use is to be greatly increased.

Private investors and community groups face the same decisions when considering the costs and time involved in obtaining land use regulation changes where these are needed.

Accessibility of the Re-Use Site

The accessibility of a site includes both external and internal access factors.

The success of a project can depend on the location. For example, an arts centre or senior citizens centre in the downtown area would be highly accessible to potential users, including those who come by transit or on foot. A community library near to schools and residential areas would be convenient and accessible to its users.

Depending upon the nature of the activity involved, the internal access factors such as the location of driveway entrances and the amount of parking need to be considered. If parking is not available on-site, patrons or staff will need to park off-site. Often, parking requirements will be a significant factor in choosing an appropriate use.

Re-use projects serving the elderly or disabled may require exterior ramps and/or elevators in the building.

Financial/Administrative Considerations

Financial Implications

Costs include renovation, maintenance, financing, and operation. Financial responsibility should be defined at the outset among those involved, including the municipality, community groups using the buildings and the higher levels of government.

Costs may include:
- renovation expenses
- expansion expenses
- financing costs
- maintenance costs
- operations
- building purchase or lease expenses

Revenues to the municipality may include:
- building sale
- rental or leasing income
- business revenue
- property taxes

Some municipalities have a variable rental scale for different user groups.

An appraisal of the site and building value may be required to determine if selling the property would be worthwhile to subsidize a project elsewhere. Similarly tax assessment from private use of the building can be estimated.

Administrative Implications

Municipalities should define their responsibility both internally and with respect to other agencies taking part in the re-use in order to

avoid future conflict. An administrator for the re-use project should be appointed.

The case studies reveal that the municipality should care for at least the fabric of the building and its heating system. User groups may wish to do their own interior decoration and day to day maintenance. Care of outside areas needs to be defined clearly.

Funding

In some re-use case study examples, there has been additional funding available from various sources, including the Ontario Heritage Foundation, Wintario, CRCA (Ontario Community Recreation Centres Act), and Federal employment programs. The funding usually covers only part of the project and typically is directed toward restoration of heritage buildings.

Additional grants are available for experimental solar heating systems, or for upgrading the heating or insulation of the building. Still other funding may be available through urban renewal programs such as ONIP (the Ontario Neighbourhood Improvement Program), and CAIP (the Ontario Commercial Area Improvement Program).

Other Considerations

Tourist Potential

Some buildings have the potential to attract tourists. Public familiarity with these buildings may provide owners or renters with inherent or "built-in" clientele requiring their services. Some buildings may also draw visitors from outside the community, depending on what the building is used for.

Some of the uses which could draw tourists include:
- dramatic performances and concerts
- exhibitions
- special restaurant
- special retail establishment
- museum

Attitudes

Attitudes towards the re-use project can determine its success or failure. Without the cooperation of the groups that are associated with the project it is unlikely to succeed.

In order to create and maintain positive attitudes toward projects, communication between the municipality and the tenants, users, and neighbours of the project is needed.

The objectives are:
- to have tenants who respect and care for the building
- to minimize vandalism
- to create public pride in the project

CONSIDERATIONS IN THE RE-USE OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS
SUMMARY TABLE

	1 USE CONSIDERATIONS			2 BUILDING AND SITE CONSIDERATIONS		
THOSE IN THE PROPOSED USE	USES AND DEMAND	INTERIM USE	SECONDARY USES	SUITABILITY OF THE BUILDING	ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC VALUE	LAND USE AND PLANNING IMPLICATIONS
Municipality/Local Governing Body **should consider. . .**	• objectives of the building re-use • worthwhile uses • range of applicants/ alternatives; or refer to inventory of need • certainty of demand for the use • non-duplication of existing services	• possibility of an interim use at low cost to verify the demand • temporary use until permanent premises are available	• use for parts of the building and site not needed for the major use	• if the building is compatible with the proposed use • building structure; fire exiting; fire safety; handicapped access; planning flexibility; mechanical systems;	• an assessment of the architectural and historic merit of the building • assessment of landmark value, streetscape/scale, etc. • compatibility of the proposed use	• compiling land use and planning impact data, e.g. parking, traffic, surrounding neighbourhood • an assessment of negative and positive impacts e.g. noise, traffic
Private Sector **should consider. . .**	• suitability of the site and building for offices restaurant, retail, etc. • ability to maintain the character of the building	• re-use on an interim basis to reduce costs/ test market	• potential to lease parts of the building to others	• suitability of building for the activity • fire safety and exiting • elevator requirements • renovation expenses • maintenance costs • parking	• the advantages and disadvantages of owning/utilizing an architecturally or historically valuable building	• Zoning and Official Plan designations • the costs and certainty of obtaining land use regulation changes
Community Groups **should consider. . .**	• user group objectives in obtaining accommodation • the need for community service in a re-use building	• the building's capability to meet interim needs • possibility of expansion or future renovation	• sharing the building with other community groups	• location • handicapped access • public access • internal convenience • whether the activity creates noise/nuisance/ vibration • whether renovation is required especially for places of public assembly	• whether use could possibly damage building character • whether the building can accommodate access and fire exiting	• assessing compatibility of use with surrounding community as well as negative and positive impacts

	3 FINANCIAL/ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS			4 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	
CESSIBILITY OF -USE SITE	FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS	FUNDING AVAILABILITY	TOURIST AND EMPLOYMENT POTENTIAL	ATTITUDES
site access assessment e.g. ocation, parking, car access rom streets, transit, edestrian entry ompatibility of access with otential users e.g. andicapped, elderly, hildren	• building cost • maintenance cost • heating • insurance • potential for rental revenue • alternative sale price and tax revenue	• municipal role • departmental roles • maintenance staff requirements	• subsidies for restoration; energy conservation; community renewal; public subscription; handicapped access, energy conservation; other • municipal budget implications	• the ability of the building to attract tourists • ability of user group to attract tourists • the number of people to be employed at the site or in spin-off activities	• the public and user group attitudes towards the project • public involvement
rominence of the building ublic access: car, transit, alking he effect on traffic	• costs: initial; short-term; long-term • maintenance costs; • taxes • potential revenue	• administrative relationships and responsibilities i.e. with municipality, user groups, funding authorities	available funding e.g. • designated heritage buildings' grants; • energy conservation grants • access grants	• the potential for building or the use to attract tourists	• communications with those involved • public approval or opposition to the project and re-zoning • the attitudes of groups involved in the building (especially when re-using landmark or heritage sites)
ccess potential for user roups e.g. children, isabled, seniors	• costs and financial responsibilities e.g. maintenance, rent, renovation, purchasing	• administrative roles of the group or external agencies i.e. municipality	• the availability of community funding and voluntary assistance	• the tourist attraction potential of the building/ building use	• the public perception of the service • public attitude toward the building • liaison with the municipality and the public

5
Conclusions

This study reveals that where municipal buildings had been re-used, the results were usually considered to be worthwhile. For the most part, this was because:

- a saving in cost resulted to users
- older buildings, were kept intact, thus meeting with public approval
- sound modern buildings were maintained
- new services were provided in the community, often related to the arts, community needs, or charitable groups
- good premises for City departments were provided
- tax assessment and local employment were provided in private projects
- tourists were attracted to art exhibitions or dramatic performances

There are many re-used buildings in the Province. This study focused mainly on practical, everyday uses, often in buildings with little architectural interest. In such buildings, flexible and unobstructed floor space was usually an advantage to the conversion. (Since new buildings constructed today may well be converted to new uses in the future, they too might benefit from a structure allowing flexible space planning).

Few negative impacts were discovered from building conversions. The negative impacts were minor, and usually had to do with administrative agreements with tenants and the temporary and low-cost nature of some of the renovations. In some cases a more thorough analysis of the building fabric and possibly more thorough attention to planning of the building space might have avoided these minor problems.

The buildings studied did not receive extensive senior government funding, except for the heritage buildings. One private example might

have qualified for such restoration funding, but the owner preferred freedom from the "red tape" involved. Other projects which were not included as case studies were possible only with senior government assistance. These projects used funding for the restoration, urban renewal activity, handicapped access and energy conservation.

In the future there will be a number of other public buildings that will become available. Municipalities will grow and annexation and re-organization of government will occur. Technology will change transportation methods and the provision of services. Consequently, inventories are needed of buildings which may become available, as well as the obsolete public and private buildings which should be saved and would need public support. Similarly, potential municipal space needs, "desirable" users, and a priority assessment method might well be determined in each municipality in order to match the users with the space.

There is a great deal of practical experience in building re-use in Ontario, and the communities without such experience proved to be exceptions. The study found few surprises, and general satisfaction with the re-use experience.

The public is usually overwhelmingly in favour of keeping older and sound buildings when this is practical. That is one reason the re-use of buildings in the communities investigated can be considered successful.

Appendices

Appendix A
Telephone Survey of Municipalities

Municipality	Former Use	Converted Use
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF DURHAM		
City of Oshawa	police station church condo sales office fire hall residential	• arts resource centre • city community centre • community centre • commercial space • museum
Town of Ajax	municipal office	• courthouse and community centre
Town of Newcastle	grain mill town hall residential	• visual arts centre • community hall • museum
Town of Pickering	church residential	• community centre • community centre
Town of Whitby	county courthouse	• community centre
Township of Brock	hydro building	• library, seniors club, public info.
Township of Scugog	industrial building	• public works garage
Township of Uxbridge	newspaper building office	• civic centre • residential

*This list is a telephone survey of municipalities between 5,000 and 125,000 population. It is based upon one to two contacts only. There may be some omissions or discrepancies for some municipalities.

Municipality	Former Use	Converted Use
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF HALDIMAND-NORFORLK		
City of Nanticoke	bank	• city clerks office
	Port Dover Town Hall	• playhouse, theatre
Town of Dunnville	Bell telephone building	• civic centre
	library	• chamber of commerce
Town of Haldimand	Hagersville town hall	• hydro, school, community centre
	Cayuga town hall	• library, federal government office
	Caledonia town hall	• hydro
Town of Simcoe	fire hall	• museum
	post office	• architect office dance studio
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF HALTON		
Town of Milton	courthouse	• municipal office
	municipal office	• conservation authority
Town of Oakville	post office	• retaining centre
	customs house	• museum
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH		
Town of Ancaster	town hall	• public function banquet hall
Town of Dundas	Carnagie building	• library, arts and crafts
Town of Stoney Creek	town hall	• firehall, health unit
	hydro substation	• offices
Township of Flamborough	east town hall	• library
	west town hall	• library
	Beverley town hall	• library
	Waterdown town hall	• fire hall
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA		
City of Niagara Falls	city hall	• provincial court
	township hall	• museum
	Chippewa town hall	• crafts, community centre
	Willoughby town hall	• community centre
		• community group offices
City of Port Colborne	post office	• city hall
City of St. Catharines	town hall	• library
	town hall	• historical museum
	township hall	• sports administration
	grocery store	• bingo hall
	water works	• industrial
	municipal office	• police station
	fire hall	• retirement centre
City of Thorold	fire hall	• offices
	town hall	• conservation authority
	town hall	• library
	library	• seniors drop-in
City of Welland	township hall	• fire hall, offices
	post offices	• offices
Town of Lincoln	fire hall	• community centre
	town hall	• court
	town hall	• library
	police station	• public works
Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake	court house	• offices
	fire hall	• commercial
Town of Pelham	municipal offices	• community centre
	old barn	• community centre

Municipality	Former Use	Converted Use
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON		
City of Gloucester	construction office	• community and cultural centre
	post office	• nursery (childrens)
City of Kanata	town hall	• community centre
	Klondike city	• Kanata hydro
	hall/garage	• parks storage
City of Vanier	seminary	• community centre
	church dormitory	• library
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF PEEL		
Town of Caledon	town hall	• church
	town hall	• commercial community centre
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF SUDBURY		
City of Sudbury	car dealership	• Sudbury hydro
	fire halls	• ambulance stations
	town hall	• offices
	hydro	• police station
	hydro storage	• parks department
Town of Onaping Falls	police station	• municipal offices
Town of Rayside-Balfour	two town halls	• two fire halls
Town of Valley East	post office	• library
Town of Walden	town hall	• seniors centre

Municipality	Former Use	Converted Use
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WATERLOO		
City of Cambridge	farmers market	• community meeting rooms
	fire hall	• commercial
	Preston town hall	• chamber of commerce
	Hespeler town hall	• community halls
City of Waterloo	post office	• commercial
	library	• police station
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK		
Town of Aurora	municipal building	• commercial boutiques
	fire hall	• parks maintenance
Town of Markham	residential	• public hall
	fire hall	• commercial (sports)
Town of Newmarket	town hall	• culture and recreation
	fire hall	• storage, museum
	commercial	• commuity centre
Town of Richmond Hill	post office	• private offices
	fire hall	• community club
Town of Vaughan	railway station	• scouts/girl guides
	residential	• senior recreation
Town of Whitechurch-Stouffville	municipal office	• private office
	residence	• municipal office
	post office	• seniors
DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY OF MUSKOKA		
Town of Bracebridge	post office	• commercial offices
Town of Gravenhurst	police station	• town hall/fire hall
	town hall	• opera house
	CN Train Station	• City transit station

Municipality	Former Use	Converted Use
COUNTY OF BRANT		
Town of Paris	offices	• town hall
	municipal office	• public utility
	post office	• commercial (grocery)
	residential	• police station
COUNTY OF BRUCE		
Town of Kincardine	post office	• municipal office
Town of Port Elgin	school	• town hall, commercial apartment, mixed
	commercial	• community centre
COUNTY OF DUFFERIN		
Town of Orangeville	bank	• library
City of St. Thomas	library	• municipal offices
	bank	• art gallery
Town of Aylmer	post office	• town hall
	town hall (Elgin)	• library
	residential	• museum
COUNTY OF ESSEX		
Town of Tecumseh	industrial	• community centre
	post office	• public utilities
COUNTY OF FRONTENAC		
City of Kingston	incinerator	• public works
	barn	• parks department office
	residential	• public works
	military	• cultural centre
	public utility	• city offices
Kingston Township	municipal offices	• service club
Pittsburg Township	town hall	• county library

Municipality	Former Use	Converted Use
COUNTY OF GREY		
City of Owen Sound	industrial wool mill	• theatre rehearsal
	post office	• retirement home
Town of Hanover	CNR station	• municipal storage
COUNTY OF HASTINGS		
City of Belleville	public utility	• commercial
Township of Sidney	church	• community centre
	church	• storage
	church	• restaurant
	church	• library
COUNTY OF KENT		
Town of Wallaceburg	private office	• municipal office
	library	• municipal office
	bank	• seniors centre
	railway station	• public works
	post office	• police station
COUNTY OF LAMBTON		
Township of Sarnia	fire hall	• police station
	residential	• library, art gallery
COUNTY OF LANARK		
Town of Smiths Falls	post office	• legal office
	office building	• Parks Canada office
	industrial	• storage
	construction	• public works
Town of Carleton Place	town hall	• provincial office
	post office	• commercial/residential
	fire hall	• police station
	armoury	• community centre
Town of Perth	legion hall	• multiple use
	post office	• mixed commercial
	police	• residential
	residential	• seniors centre

Municipality	Former Use	Converted Use
UNITED COUNTIES OF LEEDS AND GRENVILLE		
City of Brockville	post office	• cultural centre
	commercial	• mill restaurant (heritage)
	residential	• historical museum
	theatre	• civic auditorium
COUNTY OF LENNOX AND ADDINGTON		
Town of Napanee	County jail	• historical museum
COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX		
Town of Strathroy	post office	• commercial
COUNTY OF NORTHUMBERLAND		
Town of Cobourg	armoury	• commercial/police
	sunday school hall	• library
	freight shed (CN)	• parks department storage
Town of Port Hope	private day care	• senior citizens
COUNTY OF OXFORD		
City of Woodstock	post office	• city hall
	manse (minister house)	• arts centre
	city hall	• museum
Town of Ingersoll	liquor store	• town hall
	town hall	• chamber of commerce/ arts centre
	construction depot	• fire hall
Town of Tillsonburg	commercial	• police station
	armoury	• museum

Municipality	Former Use	Converted Use
COUNTY OF PERTH		
Town of St. Mary's	post office	• restaurant
Town of Listowel	armoury	• multi-purpose hall
	railway station	• recreation hall
COUNTY OF PETERBOROUGH		
City of Peterborough	library	• city hall
	parks department	• industrial
	market hall	• multi-cultural centre
UNITED COUNTIES OF PRESCOTT AND RUSSELL		
Town of Hawkesbury	library	• office (lawyer)
COUNTY OF PRINCE EDWARD		
Town of Picton	residential	• police
	residential	• town hall
	residential	• city offices
	town hall	• fire hall/offices
COUNTY OF RENFREW		
City of Pembroke	post office	• town hall
Town of Arnprior	post office	• library/museum
Village of Petawawa	fire hall	• seniors
	jail	• boy scouts/girl guides
COUNTY OF SIMCOE		
City of Barrie	private office	• city offices
	commercial (auto sales)	• library

Municipality	Former Use	Converted Use
City of Orillia	fire hall post office	• law offices • municipal offices
Town of Collingwood	railway station pottery shop	• historical museum • civic centre in future
UNITED COUNTIES OF STORMONT, DUNDAS AND LENGARRY		
COUNTY OF VICTORIA		
Town of Lindsay	armoury	• recreation centre
COUNTY OF WELLINGTON		
City of Guelph	retail fire station	• fire station • city offices
Town of Fergus	bank fire hall	• police offices • residential/storage/ ambulance
DISTRICT OF ALGOMA		
City of Sault Ste. Marie	post office town hall	• museum • library
Town of Elliot Lake	commercial commercial	• legion hall • library/seniors recreation
Township of Michipicoten (Wawa)	industrial	• public works/ veterinarian
DISTRICT OF COCHRANE		
City of Timmins	municipal offices health laboratory	• private office • city engineering
Town of Hearst	hospital fire hall	• town hall • town garage
Town of Iroquois Falls	commercial (car dealership)	• city public works
Town of Kapuskasing	private community centre	• town hall
DISTRICT OF KENORA		
Town of Kenora	city offices post offices	• private offices • town hall
DISTRICT OF NIPISSING		
Town of Sturgeon Falls	town hall	• culture/recreation centre
DISTRICT OF PARRY SOUND		
Town of Parry Sound	private garage law office	• fire vehicle storage • police station
DISTRICT OF RAINY RIVER		
Town of Fort Frances	legion	• historical museum
DISTRICT OF SUDBURY		
Town of Espanola	E.B. Eddy offices	• municipal building
DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY		
City of Thunder Bay	Royal Edward Hotel	• non-profit housing
DISTRICT OF TIMISKAMING		
Town of Kirkland Lake	post office municipal office	• town hall • private (mining) offices
Town of New Liskeard	provincial office	• city public works

Appendix B
Questionnaire/Checklist Applied to Case Studies

1
PURPOSE
To record the municipality's experience with the re-use process, and a description of the effects

2
INFORMATION TO BE RECORDED
Photographs

The original building
- use
- date
- condition and characteristics (in general)
- cultural value/significance of the building and its site
- original owner (municipality or governmental agency)
- approximate size

The re-use
- use
- date of re-use
- cost/cost per m^2
- user (public agency)

The site
- location
- map
- size
- surroundings
- parking spaces

The re-use procedure
- implementing agency
- municipal involvement
- financing agencies/special grants
- time required
- consultation process — public; approvals
- public attitude

Planning documents (official plan, zoning by-law)

Financial impacts on the municipality
- subsidy/revenue
- tax implication — the building and the surrounding area

Economic impact, e.g. greater employment, attraction of tourists, etc.

Land use impacts
- aesthetic
  - asset to the surroundings
- cultural
  - historic preservation
  - institution of value
  - educational
  - environment, etc.
- social
  - fulfills needs, e.g. housing
  - provides adequate/substantial accommodation
  - provides convenient/inconvenient location
  - provides adequate/inadequate on-site amenity and recreational space
- community services
  - strains services (e.g. schools, community centres)
  - augments services
  - helps utilize and support services (e.g. supplies children to schools)
- parking
  - provides parking
  - presents a parking problem in the neighbourhood
- traffic and access
  - problems
- location
  - convenient for the service
  - compromise of convenience
- servicing
  - did problems have to be overcome
- other impacts to be identified during the study
- summary identifying the significance of the particular project as an example

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POOR

QUALITY

ORIGINAL